

MY OLD
HOME
CHURCH

—
McLaurin

My Old Home Church

BY REV. C. C. McLAURIN, D.D.

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Yours Sincerely,

C. C. McLAURIN.

MY OLD HOME CHURCH

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My Old Home Church

in Rural Ontario

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BY REV. C. C. McLAURIN, D.D.

Twenty years Pastor in Ontario, twenty-five years Superintendent
In Western Canada, fifteen years Supply Pastor at Calgary, Alta.

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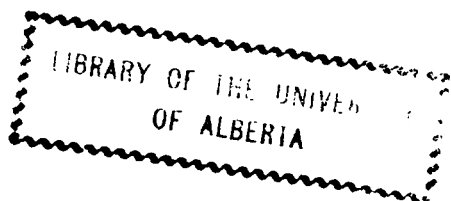
DEDICATION

★ ★ ★ ★

Dedicated in memory of one who during forty-eight years inspired me by her unselfish devotion to Christ and His Church, and by a true womanly Christian life and wise counsel enabled me to be a better Minister of the Gospel.

★ ★ ★ ★

The Author heartily thanks Professor Watson Kirkcornell of the University of Manitoba, for using his precious time in even hurriedly reading this MSS.



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FOREWORD

* * * *

It is worth while to rescue from the fast-flowing river of time the names and deeds which this booklet records. If ever a history of Canadian Baptists is written, this booklet will be an invaluable source. Here we have the soil in which sprang and was nourished the religious life of the author, and the writer has done well to take us back to the Haldanes, Robert and James, and to the earnest and fruitful work of evangelism they accomplished in Scotland. The brothers Haldane should be better known by Canadian Baptists than they are, since so important a part of the beginnings of Baptist churches in Canada is traceable to what these servants of Christ did in Scotland. Dr. McLaurin's account of the church in Clarence, and of other churches along the Ottawa, is a living, and to me, a fascinating picture. Surely there were giants in those days—Fox, Edwards, McPhail, Gilour, Ross, Tucker, and others too numerous to mention here. I am glad to have had the privilege of reading this manuscript.

—J. W. A. STEWART,
Rochester, N.Y.

INTRODUCTORY

My purpose in writing this booklet is to give my personal testimony as to the value of a rural church. At one time in Ontario, the majority of Baptist church members belonged to the Rural churches. Before there was any church in Ottawa city, there were strong churches in Osgoode, Onsabruck, Clarence, Breadalbane, Dalesville. In fact, some of these were strong before there was a Baptist church in Montreal. At one time, it seemed much easier to awaken and maintain a religious interest in a country place than in a town or city. It often was the one and only meeting place of the people. The church was the one and only organization in the community. The church service and Sunday School brought the people together on Sunday—the only break during the week from home and its tasks. The church building often was the Lecture Hall, the Temperance Lodge. All social gatherings and Literary Societies gathered in the church. This was literally true in my old Home Church.

The preacher, who was a friend to every family, was honored and respected by all.

From rural churches have come the large majority of pastors and missionaries. Of the old pioneer pastors, D. McPhail, W. K. Anderson, John Dempsey, John Higgins Elder McDor-

mand were farm boys. A. V. Timpany, John McLaurin and Alex. McDonald, our first missionaries, were from rural churches. Many of our leading laymen and women in the city churches are the product of the country. Had we been more aggressive as a people in going into the new settlements in Eastern and Western Canada, our position today would be much stronger. We have lost out by despising small churches—often small because they gave their life to large churches.

Because the rural church is free from many distractions common in the city, the pastor has an opportunity of gaining the interest and impressing the mind of the people, particularly young people. We have not properly estimated the value of the small church. The debt I owe to the influence upon my life of my old home church in the country, can never be paid. The faithful preaching and personal pastoral care, the godly, serious life of the deacons and church members, the diligent and efficient, earnest teaching of Sunday School teachers, all from farm homes, threw about my young life barriers from going wrong and guidance into the Christian life and gave me a strong desire to make my Christian life vital and effective. The rural church gives a pastor a real opportunity to do a real work. No man but is better fitted for a city church, for

having, for a time, served in a rural church. Dr. R. A. Fyfe never advised a young graduate to go to a city church. If he was asked for advice as to a choice between a small and a large church, he would invariably advise in favor of the hardest spot: "Succeed there and you will have nothing to fear as to your future usefulness and advancement." He would sometimes remark: "If you go to the city to preach, be sure you have a good coat, but if you go to the country, make sure you have a good sermon in your pocket." No one can estimate the value of even a small country church.

A denomination cannot continue to grow or even maintain its strength if it neglects the country or small village church. The country is the backbone of a nation, and the rural churches are the backbone of a denomination. Let the small churches die and decay will soon begin in the larger churches. This is what happened to Congregationalism in Canada. It crumbled until it consisted of a few popular meeting places in the cities. If Baptists let our small churches perish and we become a denomination of city churches who exist by doubling up every generation, we too shall die. Unless a large city church continues to send its members out to form small churches, with men to fill the pulpits, and teachers for Sunday Schols, its greatness will not

continue. In doing this, Spurgeon's Tabernacle continues to be a vital spiritual force in England. To hear of the passing out of one of our small churches is the cause for the falling of more tears than the death of any member, however useful. A church is of more value than a man.

If my booklet will stimulate interest in our rural churches, it will have filled its purpose.

CHAPTER I

PREHISTORIC TO THE STORY

It is most difficult at this stage in the development of our country under British rule, with our cities, transcontinental railways, and easy access to any point on the North American continent, to visualize conditions prevailing previous to and even at the time of the organization of the Clarence Baptist Church. Jacques Cartier discovered Canada in 1534. It became a French possession. Champlain, called the "Father of New France," came to Quebec in 1603, nearly one hundred years after the discovery of Canada. Of Champlain it was said that "he considered the saving of a soul was worth more than the conquest of an empire." He brought with him from France several priests, as did all those early French explorers.

From the mouth of the St. Lawrence to the Pacific was an unknown land, inhabited by tribes of Indians, who lived, as one of them said, like "brute beasts." The effort of the Roman Catholic Church to evangelize the Indians is a wonderful story. Le Caron, one of the priests brought out by Champlain, was the first white man to journey up the Ottawa river, passing the scene of our story about 1612, 200 years earlier, on his way to reach the country of

the Hurons on the south shore of Georgian Bay. Champlain followed close behind him in 1613. They simply paddled their canoes up the Ottawa, which they were hoping was the way that would take them across the country and open a short road to China.

This courageous priest with his handful of French soldiers continued up the Matawan, across Lake Nipissing, down the French River, across the Georgian Bay to the Huron tribe of Indians, in order that they might convert them to Christianity. Here are his own words: "It would be hard to tell you how tired I was with paddling all day with all my strength among the Indians; wading the rivers a hundred times and more through the mud and over the sharp rock that cut my feet; carrying the canoe and luggage through the woods to avoid the rapids and frightful cataracts; and half starved all the while, for we had nothing to eat but a little sagamite, a sort of porridge of water and pounded maize." Parkman gives a most vivid description of the mission of these Jesuit missionaries.

The Roman church has been foremost of all religious bodies to bring Christianity to American Indians, who among the aborigines of all lands have given the least in the way of Christian development of even civilization. Their missionaries, with hospital and church buildings, are to

be found along all our rivers and lakes to the Arctic ocean. The money required to pursue this extensive work astonishes one, but they can secure monetary returns from Indians that Baptists could never secure. I was told on the authority of the Hudson's Bay factor at the Indian village of Fort McLeod, B.C., that the priest reaches the miserable village only about twice a year, yet the Indians donate to the church at least one thousand dollars a year. With Baptists, the giving, in most cases, is altogether on the part of the Mission.

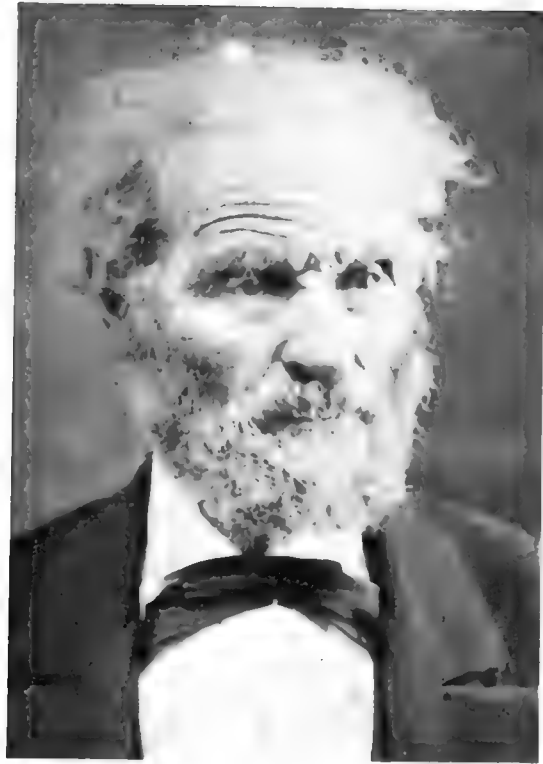
At the time of Champlain, and indeed until the time of our story of the beginning of the Clarence Church, the whole of Canada was one great "fur farm." Furs were the product of the country, the profit from which was jealously sought by British and French. The British secured Canada from the French in Champlain's time, in 1629. So little did they value it that Charles I, being hard up for money, sold it back to the French for two hundred and forty thousand dollars. Later, at a time when might was right in the eyes of nations, we glory in the fact that under General Wolfe in 1759, at the point of the sword, Canada was taken by the British. What Italy has done in 1936, Britain did, only more humanely, in 1760, and gloried in it. Surely the morale of the world has improved.

About one hundred years after Champlain, seeking the Northwest Passage, paddled up the river past Clarence, another French explorer went by on the same errand. Sieur de la Verendrye and his sons left Montreal in 1830 with a good company and provisions for a long journey of exploration, determined to go far beyond any point reached by Champlain. They continued their journey and reached Lake Winnipeg, went up the Red River, built a fort where Winnipeg now stands, another up the Assiniboine where Portage la Prairie is located, then on and on over the prairie until they were the first white men to see the east side of the Rocky Mountains. They then went north and discovered the Saskatchewan River.

Mild and insipid is the experience to the Clarence settler today, of the sights on that majestic stream compared with the thrills known to those intrepid voyageurs of those early days. Their feelings must have been indescribable as they paddled week after week hundreds of miles into the heart of the continent along a stream enclosed on either bank by dense dark Canadian forests, into regions absolutely unknown by any white man in the whole world. What must have been their experience when they saw the waters of the Rideau River tumbling over a precipice of nearly one hundred feet



REV. JOHN EDWARDS, Jr.



STEPHEN TUCKER

The First Candidate Baptized in the Ottawa

into the Ottawa River, looking in the sunset like a great bridal veil! How overwhelmed must have been their feelings as they saw the great river virtually falling into what is called the Kettle of the Chaudiere Falls, the location since then of great lumber mills and factories, which have made Ottawa City a centre of the lumber trade! Every day brought them some new surprise.

The country along the Ottawa on both sides was covered by forest of most valuable timber. The white pine covering hundreds of miles along that river became the most valuable product of the country next to furs. It is still an industry of that district. Trading in the white pine of the Ottawa has made many millionaires. The great trees were hewn into square timber, placed in the river, formed into great rafts, often covering an area of an acre, floated over rapids to Quebec City, loaded upon ships and sold in Britain. It was a common to have several of these rafts in sight in my boyhood, either floating guided by oar-men with great sweeps, or towed by tug boats. The hard woods, such as maple, birch, and beech trees, were being cut into fire wood and taken to Montreal for fuel before the coal age. Today, in that great wooded region, cleared of its woods, are found cultivated fields and comfortable farm homes. When settled, enjoying all modern com-

forts, we are apt to forget the faith, courage and determination that must have possessed those pioneers—those pathfinders who were indefatigable in their pursuit of discovery.

So the quiet hamlet of Clarence can rehearse with great interest the events in the lives of noted historic characters who prepared, enduring great hardship, for their present comfort. The news of the discoveries of those men brought the Ottawa River into prominence in nearly all the homes of the Old Land. It was the reports from these men that induced the settlers, who made our story possible, to come there for a home.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY SETTLERS

The first man to take up land in Clarence and build a home was James Fox. He was born in Dublin in 1746.

He had emigrated to New York in 1770; was drafted into the American Army during the Revolution, and was sent with the contingent that intended to capture Montreal. Being a Loyalist, he deserted the army at Montreal. In 1780 he married in Montreal a young French woman named Desang, and in a canoe with all their belongings they paddled up the river to find a location where they could establish a fur-trading post. Their hardships can be imagined as they had to conquer the Long Sault rapids single-handed. Buoyant with hope and strong in the resolve to overcome all difficulties and acquire wealth, they paddled forward. They first landed at the mouth of a creek which has ever since been called Fox's Creek, a mile east of the town of Rockland. Later they found a beautiful point with a sandy beach three miles down the river, and there they located at what has ever since been known as Fox's Point, and the island in the river, Fox's Island. There is no historical record of their experiences in that adventurous journey and the early days of their settlement. The writer of this story was born on

the adjoining farm, which his father had secured in 1848. They had a son James, who possibly was born in Clarence. He became a Justice of the Peace as the country became settled. Mr. and Mrs. Fox died and filled the first graves in the Clarence cemetery, which was located on their farm. A monument has the following inscription:

JAMES FOX

Born 1746 — Died 1823

and his wife

MARY DESANG

Born 1756 — Died 1816

The first settlers, with their young son

James, in Clarence

James the Second, and his son, Edward T. Fox, moved to Winchester, in Dundas County. Edward T. was the father of the late Rev. E. T. Fox, of Toronto. He afterwards moved to Guelph, where he died in 1900. Dr. W. S. Fox, President of the Western University, London, Ontario, with Carey Fox, of Toronto, and a sister, are children of Rev. E. T. Fox and therefore great-great-grandchildren of the first settler of Clarence.

The next settler on the Upper Ottawa was Philemon Wright, who found his home in what is now the City of Hull, opposite the later site of Ottawa. After years of exploring both banks of

the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa, he left his native town, Woburn, Mass., in February, 1799, for his new home in Canada. He had with him five families, twenty-five hired men, fourteen horses, eight oxen. It required seven sleighs to carry the human freight, tools and supplies. No one today can ever visualize the hardships endured. Through deep snow a road had to be cut out of solid forest to pass Long Sault Rapids. Next they had to build a home in the virgin forest and begin clearing away the heavy timber for their first farm crop. He took the first raft of timber down the river to Quebec. He was a real pathfinder. He became a member of the Quebec Parliament. His descendants have made a name for themselves. He had faith in his ultimate success, and labored with undaunted perseverance.

John Edwards, Sr., was the next to settle on the Ottawa and in Clarence. He is entitled to rank among the industrial and religious heroes of Canada, one who perhaps accomplished more during his lifetime in propagating the cause of Baptist churches in Old Canada than any other pioneer known in our history.

John Edwards was born in Morayshire, Scotland, in the year 1780. As a young man he left the farm to go to Edinburgh to learn the trade of a shipwright. The character of the home in which

he was reared was revealed in the parting words of his father: "Jack, be sure and remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." Arrived in Edinburgh, he engaged with a Leith shipbuilder, being bound for seven years as an apprentice. He continued in this occupation in Scotland and England.

About the time that he went to Edinburgh, in the closing years of the 18th century, two brothers, Robert and James Haldane, evangelists, were making no little stir by their so-called new-fangled preaching. They were charged from pulpits with being "wolves in sheep's clothing." But they lived to enjoy the esteem of all classes and churches in the land. Thousands have owned them as their spiritual fathers. The late Chancellor Haldane, though himself baptized as a lad, does not honor himself by his slighting remarks in his autobiography upon the evangelistic zeal of his forbears. The young man, John Edwards, whose story we are recording, out of curiosity went to hear James Haldane as he preached at the circus at Edinburgh. The message proved effectual, a change of heart was experienced, and he joined the church under the care of Haldane. Although the Haldanes had been Congregationalists and had become Baptists, their sincerity and integrity were not questioned. Their evangelistic messages, new to

much of Scotland at that day, was the old gospel with a new expression and uttered with a deep fervor. The truth burned as a bright light throughout the land. Many of their converts became eminent and useful preachers in many parts of the world. "The Scottish clergy were mostly of the 'Moderate' school and took great objection to the new lights, and efforts were strenuously used to silence the babblers, but to no purpose."

The Haldanes were two gentlemen of property, of an old family, and had given up an honorable career on the sea in order to promote religion in Scotland. They were the means of the conversion of thousands. Many Baptist churches came into existence as a result of their labors. The original members of the Breadalbane church in Glengarry, Ontario, came from one of these churches at Glenlyon, Perthshire. The charter members of Dalesville Church were converts under their preaching. It is interesting that Madame Feller, the founder of the Grande Ligne Mission, the first mission to the French of Quebec, was converted under the preaching of James Haldane, when evangelizing in Switzerland, and fired with his zeal, came as a missionary to French Canada. Many of their converts had the same spirit that possessed John Edwards, and went everywhere preaching the Word. With

him, Christian service became an everyday business. His tool chest contained a canvas covered Bible, and at every spare hour he was gathering seed, which he faithfully sowed.

He was moved to Portsmouth, then the great naval base of England, during the time of the Napoleonic war, where every useful hand was employed. Even here he was instant in season and out of season, which to him was a solemn obligation. The Sabbaths were more fully occupied than week days. He would often supply the pulpit of ministers, and would conduct services in the sailors' barracks and upon the street.

But after the battles of Trafalgar and Waterloo, which sealed the fate of Napoleon and blessed Europe with peace, the demand for ship-builders and other craftsmen slackened. Wages were reduced. Emigration to America became popular. He, his wife and his three sons constituted his family. His two eldest boys had very promising positions training for the Navy. There was strong inducement to remain in England, but the new world as a future home called him. Strangely, British Canada was from the first the chosen place. Backwoods farming was to be his secular employment, while he anticipated a wider field of usefulness in his loved employ of preaching the Gospel.

He bade adieu to his friends and the Old Land

in March, 1819, went to France, and after two weeks secured a ship for New York, which city he reached in five weeks. Other men of his craft and partakers of his religious zeal, accompanied him, of whom we shall shortly speak. The British Consul in New York, to whom Edwards had letters of introduction, detained them to repair British ships that had been disabled. But that fall, after they sailed up the Hudson River to Albany, they went by wagon over to Sackett's Harbor, and thence by sloop across Lake Ontario to Kingston. For a period he was employed in the naval yards at Kingston, but frequently preached in the town, which "was indifferently supplied with ministers."

Early in the year 1822, Edwards made a tour through the country west of Kingston, looking for a location in the bush where he could establish a farm and preach the Gospel. Then his attention was directed to the Ottawa River by some officers who wished themselves to locate there. He went to explore the region by going down the St. Lawrence to Cornwall aboard a Durham boat, and then walking across, he reached L'Original, on the Ottawa, ascended the river in a batteau about thirty miles and landed at Fox's Point, Township of Clarence. After tramping the woods, he decided upon this as his future home. He then ascended the river

to Richmond's Landing, the present location of Ottawa City—the capital of the Dominion—and then on roads and paths through the bush, walked to Kingston. There was much interest in the company at Kingston, as all were preparing to reach their new home. A batteau was placed at their disposal upon condition that it would be returned when required by His Majesty's Service.

The party consisted of three or four families. After the boat was heavily loaded with the belongings of all, piloted by a French Canadian, they sailed down the St. Lawrence through the dangerous rapids. After reaching the junction of the Ottawa, they ascended it, and after overcoming the formidable Long Sault, in two weeks from the time they left Kingston they landed at Fox's Point. This was in 1823, just thirty years after the settlement of James Fox.

The next settlers to be mentioned are the three families who accompanied John Edwards and for whom he had selected land when prospecting. Nicholas Agar, Robert Surtees, and Henry Mathews of Devonshire, England, were fellow ship-carpenters with Edwards in Portsmouth England. They were not only fellow-workmen, but fellow-Christians and members of the Baptist faith. One can surmise that they might have been converts of this persistent

preacher while working together—at least there was a strong spiritual attachment that continued to hold them together.

Nicholas Agar was a singer and used as such by the itinerant preacher. The Agar home was just east of the present Clarence church building. It was afterwards occupied by John Ramage, and then by the Erskine family. The writer recalls the tall old man, wearing to church what was called a “stove-pipe” hat. His funeral was conducted in what is known as Roe’s Grove. He was highly respected.

Robert Surtees had six sons—Cuthbert, Robert, George, Charles, James, and John. They all made homes near each other. Their descendants are numerous and are to be found all over Ontario and in nearly every province of the west. Some of them are still prominent and useful members of the Clarence church.

Henry Mathews was settled in the midst of his old associates. His family was not numerous but his daughter’s family, bearing the name of “Thornton”, are in the community still.

These four families had left England together under the strong leadership of John Edwards.

John Edwards purposed making a home on land where he could support his family by farming—his choice was the backwoods of Canada, where he could preach the Gospel to new

settlers and thus fulfil his conviction of duty. They all willingly followed his leadership as they were imbued with the same spirit. There must have been a high, holy purpose actuating them, which held them so closely together in the face of many difficulties. Sharing each other's burdens, strengthened by the bond of union, they each settled in a dense forest where great trees had to be cut down to make room for even a small cabin. They had, with thousands of others in old Ontario, to clear a patch of soil of these great trees, before they could plant or sow, and thus produce food which could not be had at that time within many miles. Montreal, a hundred miles away, was the nearest town. There were no roads, not even a path through the forest to any place. But they were happy, enduring hardship in their purpose of having a home for their families and of being helpful in establishing a church that would send out blessing among the people of a new country. Like Paul, they laid the foundation, and others have built thereon.

About this time, Stephen Tucker, born in Brandon, Vermont, U.S.A., came to St. Andrew's to make brick, then to Papineauville across the river from Clarence as a lumberman, secured timber limits in Clarence, which induced him eventually to make his home there.

A few years after James Fox settled in Clarence, a distant relative, Captain John Roe, born in Wexford, Ireland, came to Canada and made his home in the same district. He was from conviction an Anglican. His son George married a daughter of Nicholas Agar, became a Baptist, and for years was clerk of the Baptist church and a deacon. His numerous family became leading citizens and active workers in the cause of Christ.

Another family was that of William Lamb, prominent as a Christian citizen, who came with his father from Sterling, Scotland, in 1831, to Lochabar across the river; but William married and established his home on the farm known afterward as the Tucker Home.

In 1832, George Anderson, the writer's maternal grandfather, came from Aberdeen and settled about one mile east of Fox's Point. He had been a member of John Gilmour's church in Aberdeen and was with him in the first church in Montreal.

Andrew Sherrif, a neighbor of George Anderson in Scotland, and a weaver, came to Clarence in 1834. His four sons, Josiah, Andrew, James, and Benjamin, all became home-makers in Clarence, many of their descendants still filling useful places in community and church.

Alex. McLaurin, a member of the Cragnavie

family of McLaurins, who came from Perthshire in 1816 and settled with others of the same name in Breadalbane, Glengarry County, moved to Clarence about 1845. He afterwards moved to Templeton, Que., but his son Peter A. McLaurin remained on the farm. The father of the writer, Peter C. McLaurin, a cousin, shortly afterward made his home as next neighbor.

The families of Richard Woodley, Isaac Langford, and Thomas Kerr from Devonshire, began about this time to compose an important part in the growing settlement. Simpson Edwards, called "Souter" Edwards, left his shoe-shop, customers, and home in Paisley, Scotland, to till the soil in this new land, settling west of what is now Rockland. The family have always been among the most active Christian workers in my old home church.

My list of early settlers has grown beyond my expectation, and yet I should mention the McDougals some of whom became very eminent citizens, McCaul, whose farm, McCaul's Point, is the site of Rockland town, and T. Wilson, the Clarence storekeeper. We shall make special mention of some of these men in another chapter.

Here was a community of families who came together from England, Scotland, Ireland, and the United States, mostly strangers to each other in a new country that was as Nature made it,

covered with a heavy growth of forest. All were about equally divided as to the possession of money, few of them accustomed to tilling the soil — carpenters, weavers, shoemakers, and other occupations. In such a case, there is always a great question mark as to what will be the result. They were a happy, prosperous, moral people, with qualification that are not always found among pioneers, as the records from all over this Canada of ours will prove. They pursued a course that almost without exception brings results such as they experienced. The first meeting of the people was a religious service. Their first organization was a Christian church. The first public building erected was, you might say, a church and school combined; and the school was organized and carried on by the church before the church building was erected. The leading citizen, he who really formed the settlement, while he was a hard working farmer, was an active Christian minister, unselfish, diligent, zealous, and faithful in delivering a message from God. Their spiritual and eternal welfare was his and the people's first consideration. How could there be anything but success?

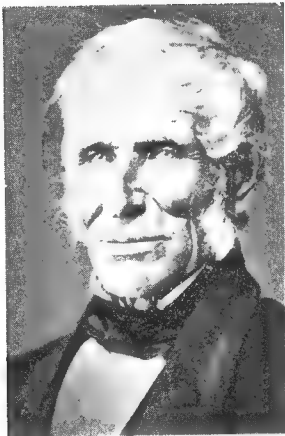
CHAPTER III

THE STORY OF THE CHURCH AND ITS PASTORS

The first Sunday immediately after landing, John Edwards conducted service in the home of James Fox. He afterwards baptized James Fox the Second. There were but six settlers in Clarence Township at this time; one barn; one horse. One man threshed his grain on the ice; another in the stable loft. The country on both sides of the river was unbroken forest.

After John Edwards had secured his land and arranged for the settlement of his associates, he built his house at Fox's Point, as his land adjoined and was a part of that place. This house, the ruins of which the writer often looked upon, and the cellar of which is still noticeable, became the meeting house of the church, which was organized with seven members in 1825. A Sunday School was organized which has continued during all these years. Many a spot of much less importance has been memorialized by the erection of a permanent monument. Upon this old cellar should be placed some mark that would remind succeeding generations of the beginning of their present spiritual and temporal possessions.

After some years the church moved to Clarence Village, about a mile up the river, and



REV. JOHN GILMOUR



REV. WILLIAM FRASER

The Paul and Silas of the Ottawa



REV. JOHN KING



ROE'S POINT, WHERE HUNDREDS WERE BAPTIZED

about twenty-six miles down the river from the city of Ottawa, although there was no Ottawa then. The village consisted of a school house, a store (sometimes two), a blacksmith shop, a town hall, and a few private homes. Their meeting place then was a square, cottage-roof log building which stood a little west of the present stone building. After the present church was erected, it was used as a schoolhouse, then as a private residence until about 1880.

There was no minister of the Gospel in all the Upper Ottawa at the time of the settlement of Edwards, except a Rev. Mr. Meach, a Congregationalist who followed Philemon Wright to Hull. John Edwards was burdened with the spiritual destitution that prevailed among the settlers who were coming in large numbers, building houses in the bush on each side of the river. He was most energetic in clearing his own land and making a home for his family, but on Sundays he was more busy than on week days. There were no roads. With one of his boys, he would paddle his canoe from five to fifteen miles and hold services among the new settlers at Cumberland, Buckingham, Lochabar, Papineauville, and Plantagenet Mills, sometimes reaching families only by following the blaze upon the trees. Preaching the Gospel was his loved employment. He did not labor in vain. He raised up the Cross,

and multitudes flocked to it; and children's children have proved its power to change their lives. It was his privilege to be the first man to consecrate the Ottawa River to the purpose of baptism. Stephen Tucker, a much respected lumber merchant, was the subject. Later we will see the important place filled by this first baptismal candidate. This took place in 1829 at Papineauville. Crowds came in canoes from great distances to join in the services of that day.

He devoted his energies to maintaining the regular services of the church. He found his greatest pleasure in preaching the Gospel, but he was interested and active in the general welfare of the community. The Sunday School was in a measure a secular school until one was established. A "Young Men's Society for Moral, Religious and Intellectual Improvement" was organized. In this, many developed talents and were prepared to fill important positions. He organized a Bible Society, co-operating with the British and Foreign Bible Society. Then there was need of a Temperance Society. Total abstinence was becoming very desirable and popular. Strange to say, either brought on the batteaux from Kingston, or from Montreal, a puncheon of whiskey arrived at Fox's Point. The two stories have been given me. It was for sale in this religious colony. Some say that total abstinence

(Mr. Edwards being among the first to sign the pledge), became so universally signed that what remained in store at that time was dumped into the river. At any rate, no liquor has ever been sold legally in Clarence since then, until late years. During my boyhood I never saw a drunken man. The entire English-speaking community not only abstained from drink, but from tobacco also. Including John Edwards, all gave up the habit and nearly every man adhered to his pledge. To this day, in this congregation a smoker is very rare.

John Edwards became overwhelmingly concerned because of the spiritual destitution that prevailed along the river. A Baptist church was organized in Breadalbane, about thirty miles distant, in 1816, but had no pastor. He longed for a co-laborer. On his own initiative and at his own expense he sailed in 1829 on a timber ship to England and Scotland to arouse the Baptists there to send laborers into this needy field. He carried a letter from Ebenezer Muir of Montreal to Rev. John Gilmour of Aberdeen, urging him to come to Montreal to aid the few Baptists who were there. The message was delivered by the hand of John Edwards, quite unceremoniously, while the Gilmour family were at breakfast. John Gilmour at first was amused but afterwards became serious. He had been in Montreal as a

sailor boy; had been captured by the French on his way to England along with the entire crew and made a prisoner. During that time he, along with many of the sailors, was converted and became an active and aggressive Christian worker. When liberated, he entered upon a course of study preparatory to preaching the Gospel, and was now found pastor of a growing church in Aberdeen. He accepted the challenge and returned with John Edwards, reaching Montreal on September 7th, 1830, and preached on the 11th in Bruce's schoolhouse on McGill street. Edwards succeeding also in bringing out Rev. Wm. Fraser to become pastor of Breadalbane church. These two men became the Paul and Silas of the Ottawa river. Together they went at frequent intervals to visit new settlements and aid struggling churches, and their services were followed with most gracious results. Their missionary spirit was not bounded by city or local church limits.

John Edwards found the church at Clarence prospering, notwithstanding his absence. In 1831, he was ordained to the work of the ministry, and the same day his son John was baptized. But he had occasion for discouragement. He did not see the spiritual progress for which he prayed and labored. He was not satisfied to gather single sheaves while he knew that a great

harvest field was going to waste. His longing for an awakening was not in vain, a gracious revival was experienced. Another chapter relates the story.

Edwards, who always regretted his own lack of education, was largely instrumental in initiating the movement for the establishment of a college for the training of a native ministry. As a result Rev. John Gilmour went to Britain, collected money and brought out Dr. Davis as Principal and teacher in a Baptist College, established in Montreal. It was in 1839 that John Edwards was sent to Britain to collect funds for missionary advancement, but particularly for the completion of the fine building erected in Montreal for the college. He spent a year and a half in the Old Land and was successful in awakening a wide interest. A society was organized in London for the purpose of supporting Baptist Missions in Canada, followed by the first Baptist Missionary Society in Canada at Montreal. Edwards returned in 1841 to his family and loved employment.

When preaching in Lochabar, a draft from an open window caused the beginning of a serious illness. He died on April 29, 1842, aged 62. A very casual summing up of the results of the life work of this early Baptist pioneer shows that he is worthy of a very high niche of honor

in the Canadian Baptist Hall of Fame. First and most important, he was a winner of souls. He preached shortly after his conversion in Edinburgh in shipyards, on the docks, on board the ships, in shipyards in New York and Kingston. Then he secured land in the forest, cleared it, and made a home for his family, all the while preaching over an area of at least four townships; enduring hardships, hazarding his life. He had several narrow escapes from drowning and other mishaps. Mr. Edwards had his share of escapes on bad ice, and by canoes capsizing, but all were put into the shade by his almost miraculous preservation when boarding the steamer one day.

The boat was about stopping, but the wheels were slowly revolving, when the person steering the canoe very awkwardly allowed it to pass before the wheel. In a moment the occupants of the canoe were struggling in the water. Mr. Edwards grasped one of the blades of the wheel to which he clung while it made two revolutions, his body passing through a space so narrow that everyone wondered how he escaped with his life.

A large number under his direct ministry were brought into a saving relationship to Christ. Several churches were organized as a result of his labors.

He brought from the Old Land Rev. John

Gilmour, who in Montreal organized the First Church in 1830, and was the means of establishing a college that sent out many who were among our most successful pastors in the past generation. The names of these men whom I have met personally are: John Dempsey, D.D.; W. K. Anderson, D.D., whose spiritual children were among the leading workers in our churches in the generation just passed; Rev. Elder Slaght, the apostle of the church at Waterford, which is his monument; and John McLaurin, of the Cragnavie branch of the McLaurins, a cousin of the writer's father.

John McLaurin was ordained in South Gower Church about thirty-seven years previous to the ordination of the writer in that same church. He died a young man, but members of his family are still in the old home in Vankleek Hill. Then there was Archie Campbell of Lochabar, an earnest farmer preacher; Hector McLean who retired early to Ottawa but who was a pastor in Osnabruck; Rev. E. Topping, an early pastor of Woodstock, who for years was an active lay preacher, living near Woodstock; T. L. Davidson, D.D., a fervent leader in Ontario; W. Hewson, the first pastor of St. Catharines; Peter McDonald from Osgoode church, a pastor in St. Mary's, who spent his retired years in London, Ontario, and was an eminent Hebrew

scholar. If Rev. R. A. Fyfe, D.D., was not a student in the college, he was for a time a teacher there.

John Edwards, Jr., son of the pioneer, was among the earliest graduates. He became pastor of St. Andrew's and Dalesville. Here, during his ministry a great revival swept the entire community (except two men) into the Kingdom. He was aided by Gilmour and Fraser. From this church came Daniel McPhail, that burning torch called "The Elijah of the Ottawa Valley." Mr. Alex. McGregor, who for a season was a student of Montreal college, father of Malcolm and D. A. McGregor, became one of his co-workers in Dalesville. Also A. Gillies of Sawyerville, an apostle of the Eastern Township. A bronze tablet in Dalesville church memorializes the successful pastorate of John Edwards, Jr. After a very successful pastorate in Dalesville, he went to Peterborough as pastor in the city. During three years he did much towards laying the foundation of that church. From here he was called to Clarence as the successor of his father in 1847.

John Edwards, Sr., had proved himself a man of good judgment in selecting men for these early pioneer churches. He brought to Montreal, as we have already said, John Gilmour, who evangelized in a wide area as well as built up

a strong church in Montreal and aided in the building of a college. He afterwards went to Peterborough, Ont. His name is passed down to us in the churches he established in that vicinity, and his descendants, particularly in the person of the late Rev. J. L. Gilmour, D.D., of McMaster University, and his son, Rev. G. P. Gilmour, now a professor of McMaster.

Mr. Edwards at the same time, brought to Glengarry, William Fraser, whose labors along the Ottawa were abundant and who afterwards went to Bruce and built up a strong church in Tiverton. From his church went forth into the ministry three brothers: J. P., P. A., and James McEwan; also P. H. McEwan and A. A. Cameron, who have been among the leading pastors in the generation just passed.

He brought Dr. Girdwood to succeed John Gilmour in Montreal. Dr. Girdwood was a scholar, a successful pastor and a great help in the college.

He brought John King, who for a short time taught school in Clarence and then studied in Montreal College, and for forty years was pastor pastorate in Dalesville came J. G. Calder, John Higgins, and Rev. R. S. McArthur, 40 years pastor in New York.

Apart from his own personal labors and bringing in these four really great men to co-

operate with him in giving the Gospel to the early settlers along the Ottawa River, he left a heritage in his own family that has been an honor to him and brought much honor to the cause of the Master, whom he so diligently served. His eldest son, James, moved to Peterborough, became editor of a paper, and for years lived a godly life of great activity in connection with the church. I recall his visits to Clarence and his earnest words in the Sunday School when I was a lad. His family, scattered as far west as Edmonton, have followed his example.

After the death of John Edwards, Sr., in 1842, the church was virtually pastorless. In those four years it had its Gethsemane. Dissension arose. Bitter tears were shed and bitter words were said. Some one recorded that the church was brought to ruin and lay desolate for five years. But after the arrival of John Edwards, Jr., the church came together and was greatly enlarged. Much blessing came to the people on both sides of the river. Those on the north side organized the Thurso Church in 1857. There were seasons of large ingathering. During this time, the writer's father and mother were baptized. The present church building was erected in 1854, the year of my birth.

After leaving Fox's Point, one mile down the river, the church met at Clarence Village in a

square log church or schoolhouse with a cottage roof which stood about two hundred feet west of the present stone church. The entire community was in a happy and fervent spiritual condition. The Baptists had the only Protestant church in the township. I never had the opportunity of entering a church of another denomination until I went to college.

Rev. John Edwards, Jr., by which name he was usually known, was born in Leith, Scotland, in 1808. He was trained as a youth as a naval officer. He came to Canada with his parents. As I have stated he was baptized in Clarence, educated in the Baptist College of Montreal, was pastor of St. Andrew's and Dalesville for six years, then in Peterborough for about six years, and then in Clarence until he resigned in 1858. He followed the footsteps of his father in ministering to Clarence, Lochaber, afterwards Thurso, Buckingham, Cumberland, Papineauville, North Nation Mills and Plantagenet. During those years he had in all these places seasons of gracious ingathering. He followed blazed trails through the forest in his visitations of widely scattered families and reaching preaching appointments. He paddled across and up and down the river. He was without any exaggeration a faithful minister of the Gospel. As a lad I often heard my father and others speak his

praise. He was held in high esteem; he was blameless. Never did I hear an adverse criticism of his life or work. One of the last duties which he discharged before leaving Clarence was conducting the funeral of my mother. I remember seeing him just before leaving Clarence. He was tall and stood erect. In appearance and manner he was a cultured gentleman. The impression of his stately form and attractive face abides with me.

Failing strength from arduous toil compelled him to resign. A sea voyage was advised. This became possible as he was appointed secretary of the Grande Ligne Mission. He was asked to go to Scotland and England in the interest of this mission. He secured large donations from men like the late T. Coats of Paisley, noted thread manufacturer, and others whose benefactions still continue. He made a second journey to Britain in 1863 on behalf of Grande Ligne Mission. His daughter writes me, saying, "It was after a very busy day of soliciting funds in London, August 1866, that tired-out nature sank beneath the strain, and in attempting to rise the following morning he fell. Upon being discovered some hours later, paralysis was found to have set in, and complete helplessness ensued for many weeks." He rallied, and was able to return to his home in Montreal that autumn. While on

his way, on December 22nd, to visit his brother James in Peterborough, waiting for his train in Port Hope, he had a second seizure of paralysis. "At eventide he crossed the bar, and the faithful servant of God entered into rest at the age of fifty-eight."

The funeral in Montreal was conducted by Rev. John Alexander. The remains were conveyed by his brother William to Clarence. A funeral was held in the Clarence church, filled to overflowing by his old parishioners. The service was conducted by Revs. J. S. Ross, D. McPhail, W. K. Anderson, and John Dempsey, pastor of Port Hope Church. He was laid beside his father and mother in the beautiful Clarence cemetery, January 31, 1866, within a few rods of where the family landed in 1823. I recall the long procession of sleighs and cutters loaded with people going to the cemetery.

Rev. John Edwards, Jr., was a man of more than ordinary intellectual strength. Two of his family survive him: a daughter, Miss Lydia, in Truro, Nova Scotia, and John, his eldest son, at Opportunity, Wash., U.S.A.

A young man, James Dewar, succeeded John Edwards, Jr. Of him I can find no record except that he was greatly beloved. He was often spoken of as a very devoted servant of God, and his early death was greatly lamented. His home was

near Ormand, and his remains lie in the Ormand cemetery.

Then came as pastor of Clarence and Thurso, Rev. G. A. Dougherty, M.A., born in Osnabruck, Ont., in 1830, and educated in Madison University. He was pastor for three years. He afterwards became pastor of Canton, N.Y., Kingston, St. George, and Leamington, Ont., and retired about 1879. He enjoyed the love and respect of both churches. He passed away in 1919. He was the first pastor I remember coming to our home. He read and prayed with us. During his pastorate, I started to Sunday School.

Rev. J. S. Ross followed as pastor of Clarence and Thurso churches. He had come from Scotland a young man, settled in Lochaber, Que., went to Clarence School, became a shoemaker, and wrought at his trade in Thurso. There he was converted and joined the Baptist church, went to Woodstock College under Dr. R. A. Fyfe, and belonged to the second class that graduated from the Canadian Literary Institute in 1862. Of him it could be said, he was faithful in season and out of season—visiting homes, interested in the spiritual welfare of individuals. He became pastor of Thurso and Clarence churches, the Ottawa River dividing them. He lived in Thurso. A canoe was used every Sunday during summer. Often a storm made cros-

sing difficult and dangerous. During early winter, when the ice was forming, many difficulties had to be overcome. During spring, when the ice was opening up and moving out, the canoe was used to cross the newly made opening. He rarely failed to meet his appointments. He preached with great directness of appeal and his earnestness was manifest in gesture and voice. His earnestness in public prayer left deep impressions upon my young and impressionable mind. He conducted a Bible Class on Thursday night, following the story of the life of Christ. This was my initiation into Bible study. It was during his ministry that I entered into that vital relationship with Jesus Christ, of which I write in a later chapter of this booklet. He baptized me in the Ottawa River at Roe's Point in June, 1868. During his ministry a very great revival was experienced in Clarence, and along the Ottawa River. It had its beginning about two months after my uniting with the church. A full account of this revival is recorded in another chapter.

Mr. Ross continued his work with unabated energy after the revival. He was tall and slender, with sharp features. He was not physically strong and constantly guarded himself against tubercular trouble, which really was the cause of his going to a milder climate. However, he

would shirk no hardship—visiting the sick, and aiding brother pastors in meetings. On one occasion I saw him go down into a veritable grave cut in ice, which was over a foot thick, and baptize several converts in mid-winter, without any protection from the icy water. It was a most impressive service.

When he left in 1869 for Casper, California, there was a deep regret expressed on every hand. After a few years in Casper, he returned to Canada, and was pastor at Tiverton for a brief period, during which time there was a gracious revival. But again he concluded that the vigorous climate did not agree with him. He returned to California, and in Casper County, near Fort Bragg, travelled and preached, and his name was an honored word in a large section. He passed away only a few years ago. Among my most precious possessions are letters he wrote me during his last days. I am sure that the ministry of Rev. J. S. Ross and the spirit prevailing in the old home church during and following his ministry has had much to do in giving form to my own ministry even to the present time.

During the pastorates of Rev. G. A. Dougherty and Rev. J. S. Ross, my church consciousness had its beginning. A happier church family could hardly be imagined. There were good

CLARENCE VILLAGE





BREADALBANE IN GLENGARRY, 1836

congregations; there was a feeling of neighborliness in the whole community, for bear in mind, it was the only Protestant church in the township. Members came regularly from Plantagenet on the east, and Cumberland on the west. Of course, no church is free from dissension during its entire history. There arose a difficulty between two families over some property willed by a grandfather. Foolishly, the dispute was brought to the church for settlement. There was room for a difference of opinion, which certainly became known when a vote was taken. Well do I remember my young life was disturbed as one and another during this time in different ways, manifested enmity. I recall particularly the absence from their usual regular attendance at church, thus refusing to assume their responsibility. War in a church is a calamity to be imperatively avoided. Many a Christian parent by such action has poisoned the mind of his children and others against the church, from the effect of which they have never recovered, driven thus away from all religious influence. To take revenge upon the Church of God by refusing to continue heartily with it, is treating the Head of the Church most unjustly.

Notwithstanding this friction, the church moved on most happily. There were conversions and baptisms, a very delightful prayer

meeting in which many took part, a bright, well attended Sunday School, well conducted, with real teaching of the Bible as its chief feature. I recall the regular attendance of families—the whole family in their own pew each Sunday—the pleasant words of greeting as they met at the door and as they parted. It was the aim of the pastor to reach the unsaved. Much of the preaching had that as its objective. The deacons and others of the church would not miss an opportunity of approaching old and young as they met, with the object of leading them to a personal interest in their salvation. Never will I forget how greatly I was impressed by the words the pastor said to me as he met me privately before a meeting, or as a deacon or some of the younger members would encourage me to become a Christian. The influence upon the entire community was very perceptible.

Because of the godliness of the members, the church commanded great respect. Its decided attitude against drunkenness and all evil habits and practices was known to all. How fortunate are young people who have the privilege of living in such a wholesome moral atmosphere! The picture is before me of that congregation coming together every Sunday. They came regularly, five, six, or twelve miles in their democrats and all kinds of vehicles, while many

walked one, two, and three miles. I owe more than I can express to faithful preaching, the careful pastoral oversight, the example of a church of consistent, earnest living people; real teaching of the Bible in the Sunday School, sympathetic, friendly deacons; living in a community where there was no liquor sold and no drunkenness and no swearing or vile language spoken—where conversations upon religious matters were the most common theme at every gathering of few or many people. Such was the atmosphere in which my early Christian life was lived.

Nearly one hundred converts had been baptized during the pastorate of Rev. J. S. Ross. To the young members particularly, his departure just at that time seemed a great loss. Yet if his moving to a milder climate would prolong the life of their beloved pastor, they rejoiced.

After J. S. Ross resigned, Rev. John Higgins of Papineauville was called to Thurso. The Thurso church had taken in North Nation Mills and Buckingham, and he was fully occupied on the Quebec side of the river. But he gave very much help to the Clarence church. When he could come and preach, the people were greatly helped. He had so much to do with the Clarence church then and afterwards, a reference to him here is necessary to make this story complete.

Mr. Higgins, an Ottawa Valley boy, born in

Montreal, reared in Dalesville, a product of Dalesville Church, a student with J. S. Ross at Woodstock, his wife a McGregor and sister of Mrs. Rev. D. McPhail—was fully prepared to continue the good work. He had a melodious voice, a vigorous mind, a consecrated heart and boundless energy. Mr. Higgins was an apostle in the Ottawa region for many years. If his biography could have been written it would be a source of inspiration to many. I was then anticipating going to college. He took an interest in me. I began to study Latin under his tuition.

The church was without a pastor the next two winters, but services were conducted regularly by the deacons. The Lord's Supper was observed weekly, pastor or no pastor. One of the deacons would conduct the service, and there was always a number who would take part. Then frequently George Edwards would read one of Spurgeon's sermons. He was a good reader, and a real interest was maintained. During the summer of 1869, Henry Bolton, a student from Woodstock, was in charge, preaching in Clarence and Rockland Schoolhouse (McCall's School it was called then). His home was at South Indian in the Township of Russell. His earnestness impressed me greatly. His last sermon was from the text. "Come, see a Man that told me all things that ever I did."

During the summer of 1870, J. W. A. Stewart, a student from Woodstock, a son of Rev. John Stewart, a pioneer pastor of Western Ontario, became acting pastor. He was yet in his teens, but he had a very responsive hearing in the old church. His strong voice and unusual subjects so systematically presented, created a deep interest. I recall the following: "If I perish I perish," (words from Esther), and "I have brought a vine up out of Egypt," (comparing the church to a vine needing support.) While I was a student, I heard him preach a sermon from the text, "Prepare to meet thy God." His divisions were, "Who? Why? When? How?" A goodly number of men and women met at the close in the front seats, weeping and seeking peace. Following this, he was a prominent pastor in Ontario, and then became pastor in Rochester, N.Y., and finally Professor and Dean of the Rochester Seminary. He has kindly contributed the foreword in this volume.

He left for the college opening in September, and it was my happy privilege to follow him to Woodstock at the New Year of 1871. It was an occasion of pleasure I shall never forget, when I climbed on a load of hay with my box, soon to reach Ottawa and board the first train I ever saw for college at Woodstock.

This ended my residential connection with

the Clarence church, as since then I have not had more than about a week at a time of personal acquaintance with it. I never cease to thank my Heavenly Father for giving me a Christian home, and for the church members who constantly surrounded me with helpful influences and good advice, and encouraged me to give my life to preaching the Gospel. They recommended me to Dr. Fyfe as a student for the ministry—I am sure with some misgivings—and always gave me their kindest consideration. The pulpit always seemed to me a sacred place because of the Godly men whom I had seen standing in it. When I was asked to preach the 100th Anniversary sermon, after giving out my text, there came over me such a sense of the sacredness of the ground I was standing upon, that I was overcome with emotion and could not preach the sermon I had prepared. I therefore changed my course, and just told them what the church had meant to me.

My story will not be complete if I do not give at least an outline of its history to the present time. Do not think that Clarence had continuous sunshine all through its years. To a church, as to each of us:

“God has not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.”

When active and aggressive people are at work—all human and therefore fallible, though

actuated by the purest motives—it might be expected that now and then there would be a clash. But if all are under the leadership of the Master, differences will be adjusted. This has been the experience of this rural church.

During the summer of 1872, the late Rev. A. C. Baker, a student from Woodstock, ministered to them.

In 1873 a man under the name of George Holmes became their pastor. Here is a story that has a voice of warning. They disobeyed Paul's counsel when he said, "Lay hands suddenly on no man."

He came as a young man from New York to Montreal claiming to be an infidel. He came in contact with the active workers of Olivet Church. He was bright and promising. He was invited to the church; he professed conversion; he knew the Scriptures, for he said he had studied the Bible to combat it. He was a talented speaker. The Mission Board sent him to St. Andrew's to preach. He made a very favorable impression. He was called to Clarence and there ordained. He associated with the pastors and churches of the Ottawa Association and was thought to be a real acquisition to the ministry. He was an acceptable preacher, pleasing, forcible, and informing. After two years he was called to Aylmer, Ont., to succeed Dr. T. L.

Davidson in one of the strongest churches. Being a boy from Clarence at Woodstock, he invited me to Aylmer for Christmas holidays. He had a large congregation and many admirers. He could preach a most effective sermon. He could present the plan of salvation with great clearness.

For three years he ministered to that large church, baptized scores of converts. One night he disappeared, left his wife and children destitute. He learned that word was coming to reveal his real character. He had been a Baptist minister in New York State, came to Montreal under the assumed name of George Holmes, submitted to baptism and ordination again, and deceived all until his departure. He afterwards appeared in a Presbyterian church in Texas, under another assumed name, opening two weeks' meetings as an evangelist. He was recognized by the Kendalls and Langfords who had, in the meantime, emigrated from Clarence, and at the close of the first service, as he was faced by his old parishioners, he denied his identity, but disappeared through the night.

A. P. McDiarmid, the first President of Brandon College, now retired at Robson, B.C., who had been a student at Woodstock, and was then a student at Toronto University, came to Clarence in 1874. His first sermon was from the

text, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God." I happened to be home at this time on my way to my mission field. The people were impressed with the well prepared and forcibly delivered message. I recall the favorable remarks made by members of the congregation. He was supply in 1875, and settled as pastor, was ordained in 1876, but was called to Strathroy in 1877. While pastor at Clarence he gave the address of charge to the candidate at my ordination in South Gower in June, 1877.

Rev. J. J. Baker, now of Toronto, then a student from Woodstock and Toronto, served the church for a few months.

In 1878, Rev. P. H. McEwan became pastor of Thurso and Clarence. His ministry bore abundant fruit. Mr. McEwan afterwards went to Victoria, B.C., first as pastor, then as Superintendent of Missions. He has passed to his reward. His name is much revered in British Columbia.

During 1880 to 1884, Rev. P. A. McEwan was pastor in Clarence. Those were years of growth, Rockland becoming an important appointment. Mr. McEwan, since then, not in Clarence but throughout the Ottawa Association, became travelling missionary among the churches. His life of much usefulness came to an end only a year or so ago. The ministry of these years en-

larged the church and increased its influence along the Ottawa. A stalwart, faithful, intelligent ministry is always attended with blessing.

Then followed Rev. S. J. Kelly, a product of the Clarendon church, who afterwards died in New Westminster, B.C. He served during 1885 - 86. He was followed, until 1888, by J. D. Freeman, as student pastor. Dr. Freeman now, afterwards was pastor in Guelph, Toronto, Fredericton, N.B., Leicester, England, and is now Professor of the University of Georgia, U.S.A. Mr. Freeman conducted the funeral of my father in 1888.

Then followed (in 1889-91) Rev. D. McLennan; Rev. T. H. Carey in 1893-95, and Rev. G. R. McFaul (who recently passed away) in 1895-98. It was here the lamented G. R. McFaul began his work as a French missionary. Rev. A. G. Campbell, now a layman in Leduc, Alberta, had a very fruitful pastorate from 1900 to 1904. Rev. L. H. Coles, now retired at Woodbridge, Ont., was pastor 1904-08. Rev. Arthur Hale and Rev. A. E. de St. Dalmas followed. All these servants of God had blessing and the church was prospered. Then Rev. R. Carkner became pastor in 1923 and continued until his decease in 1934. During his pastorate, the church celebrated its 100th Anniversary. At present the pastor is Rev. B. Owen.

The Old Home Church is not now what it was. The constituency is greatly changed. The town of Rockland, three miles distant, has developed where formerly all were farmers. The Rockland Church occupies about half the area formerly in the area of the Clarence Church. The French Canadians have crowded into every Protestant farm offered for sale, thus limiting the Protestant population. Though a French Canadian settles next door to a Protestant church, he and his children seem immune from any contagion of Protestantism. It may be because of a lack of zealous endeavor to assimilate the new element of society that they are left unevangelized by the Protestant church. The church still lives, is self-supporting, and fills an important place in the denomination. Her day of another great awakening may not be far distant. However, there are multitudes in the church triumphant as well as in the church militant, who ceaselessly praise God for the blessing which came from the rural church born and nurtured under the ministry of John Edwards, Sr., one hundred years ago.

WHY DO SOME CHURCHES DIE?

(There is always a cause.)

John warns the church of Ephesus that unless conditions are fulfilled, God "will remove thy candlestick out of its place." There is a law

that governs the existence of a church as well as the length of days of a man. Here are some causes known to ordinary observers:

1. A community changes—members move away. People of other or no religious persuasion take their place—Roman Catholics, Jews, other Protestants—but this need not be a cause. Some Baptist churches have been made up entirely of converts from such people. Their coming has created a possibility of growth. Because a church is reduced in numbers is not an excuse for dying.

2. A church becomes formal, cold, dead — members lose interest, become indifferent, apathetic. They are not working at it, cease to be active. Under the most favorable surroundings it will die. Some churches reach that condition because they have ceased to be evangelistic. They are not, as members and pastor, out after lost men. A Baptist church that is not fervently evangelistic cannot long survive, and indeed has no right to live—"Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"

3. Often the cause is with the leader or pastor. After all, according to God's plan, the pastor is the crux of the situation. Failure or success lies with him, not always, but generally, if he is not wise, and tactful, and allows or creates friction and division among members. He

fails if he does not keep his flock together. If he does not feed the flock, giving them the truth properly prepared and served up in a palatable manner, disease and death will follow. His work is not only to feed the flock—he is sent out to the world, to the mass of people who are lost in sin. If he has not a “passion for souls” the church will die. “I must go out to them if they will not come to me.” It is an axiom, “A home-going pastor has a church-going people.” Sometimes a church goes down because the pastor remains too long, sometimes because he does not remain long enough—leaves at the wrong time—just as the harvest of his sowing is ready.

The Clarence church, after a hundred years of usefulness, may die from some of the above causes, but let us hope not. It has not lived in vain.

CHAPTER IV

SOME WORTHIES IN ITS MEMBERSHIP

Not many rural churches have had in its membership such eminent laymen. There are eminent laymen in many of our city churches, who were brought into the Kingdom in some small church. Then in a new environment they have developed. But in this rural church men were brought into the Kingdom and the church, and to the end were identified with this one country church.

Stephen Tucker has the right to be named first because he was the first candidate baptized in the Ottawa River. Stephen Tucker was born in Brandon, Vermont, U.S.A., in 1798. He was tall and lean — a typical Yankee, and always recognized as such. As a young man, in 1821, he moved to the vicinity of St. Andrew's and engaged successfully in brick-making. Mr. Tucker's brother was the first editor and proprietor of the well-known farm paper, "The Country Gentleman." Stephen returned to Vermont and married Miss Lucy Cheney of his native town. They moved to Panineauville, Que., about twelve miles down the Ottawa River from Clarence. He engaged in the timber business, that is, he made with an

axe square timbers of the white pine, of which there were mighty forests along the river. He would bring these great trees hewn two and three feet square to the river bank, form them into a raft, which he floated down to Quebec and sold for the European market. He met with reverses and lost his money. He was advised by his friends in Vermont to return and regain his losses, but they were met with the retort: "The place to find my money is where I lost it."

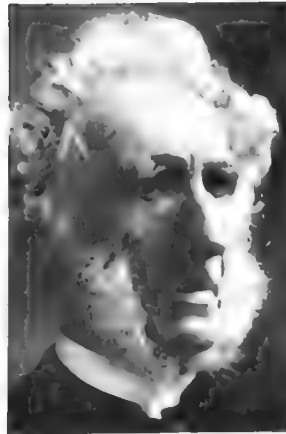
He returned to Papineauville. He and his wife went into the pine woods and lived in one end of his log shanty, while beyond the wall was his yoke of oxen. By untiring energy and indefatigable will power, he eventually became a very successful lumber merchant and accumulated considerable wealth. His Christian liberality developed with his temporal prosperity. He always regretted that many workmen lost by his bankruptcy, but after success was attained, he paid principal and interest of all he owed though by law he was exempt from doing so. Mr. Blatchford, now residing in Edmonton, who was his bookkeeper back in the 70's, gave me the following signed statement in 1930: "I aided Mr. S. Tucker, Sr., make out the interest on an unpaid wage of forty years previous, and wrote out a cheque for \$500.00 which was sent to the party then living in Washington, U.S.A."

He was a man of sterling integrity. His wealth did not change his cordial relationship as a Christian brother with the humblest people in the church or community. He was a generous supporter of all the interests of the Baptist Church, and every good cause. For many years his benefactions annually averaged from \$1,232 to \$4,013. He made many liberal gifts to Dr. R. A. Fyfe in the support of the college at Woodstock. He aided many students to pursue their studies and did this in the most unostentatious manner. His grandson, who for a while had charge of his office, tells me that coming into the office in later years he would ask, "How much money is there in the safe?" When I told him \$200.00, he said, "Too much, too much, send \$50.00 to Dr. Fyfe for the College and \$50.00 to the Home Mission treasurer."

When in 1870 I had decided to go to study for the ministry and had failed to secure funds from sawlogs that I had cut and hauled to the river bank and from a horse that I had raised, neither of which I could sell, and I was somewhat discouraged and began to fear I could not leave when I expected, he, not knowing this, called me into his office from his store and said, "I hear you are thinking of going to college; I want to help you," and handed me four crisp ten dollar bills. I do not think I walked home that night,



REV. DANIEL McPHAIL
The Elijah of the Ottawa



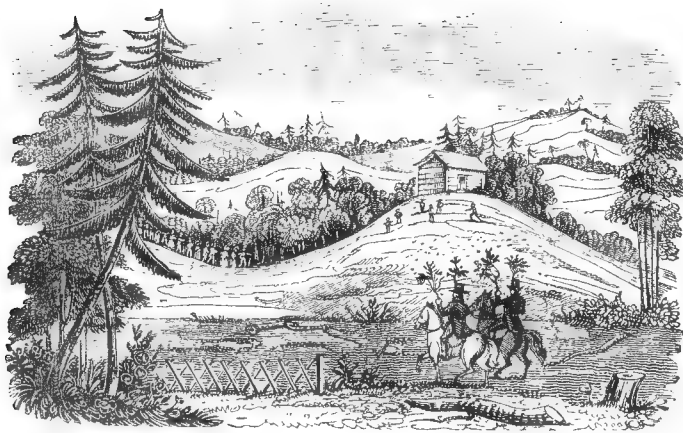
REV. W. K. ANDREWS, D.D.
The Elisha of the Ottawa



REV. G. A. DAUGHERTY, M.A.



REV. JOHN DEMPSEY, D.D.
Boanerges



SCHOOL ROOM AT CHATHAM (Dalesville), 1836

at least I felt as if I was walking on air. I saw no obstacle now in the way of going right through college. That was every dollar I had to start with. It was carefully spent.

He would come to the college in the spring and select young men whom he sent on his own account, but in co-operation with the Home Mission Board, to places on the Upper Ottawa, where he had been lumbering, to spend the summer preaching and evangelizing. In many of these places there was not one Baptist to invite the student into the settlement. On one journey to his lumber limits up the Ottawa he was benighted—spent the night in the home of a farmer, a religious man. They discussed baptism. The farmer was surprised that he could not turn readily to a Scripture supporting infant baptism. Mr. Tucker said, "Look it up, and if you find a passage favoring infant baptism, upon my return from the woods I will give you the right to go into my limits and take out a winter's cut." The farmer went to searching his Bible, and failing, went over to a Mr. Kelly, a recognized scholar, and asked for help. Mr. Kelly said, "Oh, you have him. That is easy." They both went to searching, and to their chagrin, failed. They admitted their failure. A student was sent into that section of Clarendon the next summer. There was a revival and two churches

organized. Rev. S. J. Kelly came from that church and acted as pastor of Clarence in 1885-86.

The churches of Arnprior, White Lake, Bristol, Clarendon, McNab, Fitzroy, and Pembroke, were the result of his investment. Many other churches, such as Clarenceville, Quebec, were the objects of his care. He was careful to see and know where his money was spent. At one time he owned a sawmill at Point St. Charles, Que. Fire destroyed it, and he suffered great loss. I was present the night after the fire, when he was in prayer meeting in Clarence Church, and spoke of his loss and said, "I thank God for this fire. The Lord has used this means to teach me my duty. After this I will spend each year all the money I can secure from my business in gifts to His cause and I will be my own executor and know where it is spent." This purpose he fulfilled and when he died at the age of 86 in 1884, (he had already given to his son and his six grandchildren what was their share), he had nothing to will to any cause. Not only did he give money, he gave his untiring personal effort by word of mouth and example to win men to Christ. Scarcely a young man who worked for him in his store but became a Christian while in his employ. Messrs. A. J. and J. D. Laflamme of Winchester, for a long time prominent in the

Ottawa Association, and Mr. Kenneth McDonald, who became a business man in Ottawa and identified actively with Christian work there, were among about a score of young men who were brought into the Kingdom while in Stephen Tucker's employ.

He taught a Bible Class continuously for forty years. He was an ardent student of the Bible. He frequently expressed independent views of doctrine and prophecy. Letters upon these subjects frequently appeared in the Canadian Baptist. He never missed a prayer meeting and always supported it by his testimony as well as his presence. At his baptism, he became a member of the Clarence church. When a church was formed in Papineauville he identified himself with it, but as he retired from the timber business, he moved to Clarence in 1868, where he had a large farm and a great number of horses, in which he took great pleasure. His store also was moved to Clarence, but was now in the hands of his only son Stephen, the second. Stephen the third resides in Rochester, N.Y.

He always maintained a family altar in his home. The family and hired help all gathered each morning as he read, not always a short passage, which sometimes he would expound, and then all would kneel as he led in a fervent prayer. Mrs. Tucker was a typical New England

lady, bright, intelligent, and an earnest Christian. Her home was your home as soon as you entered it. She was one with her husband in all his varied enterprises. Her consideration for his welfare would cause her to say sometimes: "Now, Stephen, keep away from those horses, they will kill you some day." He was a real horseman. Of Mrs. Tucker it was true: "She openeth her mouth in wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household and eateth not the bread of idleness."

William Lamb is the next, worthy of mention, in order of arrival in the settlement. The Lamb family came in 1831 from the vicinity of Sterling, Scotland. They settled in the forest of Lochaber on the north side of the river. They were Congregationalists. I have the following story from one of the family: "Not long after his coming, I believe, he came under the influence of the pioneer work of John Edwards. A little incident of his early religious days comes to mind. It suggests that there was a good deal of feeling and resolution in those wonderful old times on the Ottawa. After he (that is, William Lamb) had made up his mind to join the Baptist cause at Fox's Point, grandfather was much distressed by the inroads the new-fangled notions were making on his Congregational ambi-

tions. The story goes that the suggestion was soon made that he had better leave the old home. Just whether the humble little cabin was endangered by two argumentative Scotchmen in it, I don't know. Better sense, however, came to the rescue, and he did not get far away with his belongings when grandmother called him back and advised that no such radical step was necessary. I sympathize with grandfather. It was at least one very early family struggle, but it was really serious when you think that the young upstart took with him every member of the family younger than himself. Those were days of religious conviction and remind us that all the disappointments were not kept for our days."

William Lamb afterwards had for his home the farm occupied by the present Tucker homestead. After that he had his home about three miles east of the village, where he continued to farm and take out square timber. He then moved several miles farther east and built the Wendover wharf and conducted a store. The family were regularly in their places in church and the neighbors on the road, who had no clocks, knew the time of day Sunday by the passing of the Lamb conveyance. He was a deacon of the church for many years. His frequent talks with myself even when I was quite young, indicated his interest in the spiritual welfare of others.

His life and that of his family was always a testimony as to their devotion to Christ their Saviour. Many of the words he spoke to me are still fresh in mind. They were to my profit.

Mr. and Mrs. James Erskine were really the stalwarts of the Clarence church. The family came from Scotland and settled in 1840 on the farm afterwards acquired by John Mennie Sr. Some of the family moved to Cumberland. James and his brother William purchased from John Ramage the farm immediately east of the village. The family were not originally Baptists. This indeed was true of the majority of the members of the Clarence church, and as a matter of fact, the same was true of all those early Baptist churches in the Ottawa Valley. James Erskine and his wife nee Miss Taylor, were perhaps the most constant supporters of every department of the church of any in the congregation. One could hardly imagine any service Sunday or weekday being held without Mr. and Mrs. Erskine being in their place. They had no family and lived near the church. They seemed to live for the church. They were frugal, and therefore prosperous. Their liberality was manifest at the presentation of every good cause. James Erskine was quiet but not silent—steady but not slow, one of the most dependable church members. Their entire long life of Christian service

was given to the Clarence church. No one ever questioned their integrity or sincerity. Everyone was their friend, and their friendship was returned one hundred per cent. Their kindly interest in my spiritual welfare as a young Christian was like summer sunshine and rain to a growing plant. He and his brother William became millwrights of the Rockland Mills, established by W. C. Edwards & Co. Though they moved to Rockland they ever remained members and generous supporters of the old church. If a couple like Mr. and Mrs. James Erskine were living in any settlement in civilization, there would be a Baptist church at work.

Andrew Sherriff, a weaver by trade, came from Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1854. with his four sons. He had been a member of Rev. John Gilmour's church in Scotland. My maternal grandfather, George Anderson, also had come from Aberdeen to Clarence. Mr. Sherriff was an earnest, godly man. He was a trained musician, and could play the violin well. He succeeded Mr. Agar as leader of the singing in church. He sat in the front seat, and after the hymn was announced and all verses read, he would stand up and face the congregation, strike his tuning fork on his knee or on the back of the pew, and hum "do, me, fa, sol"—and thus start the first line. The congregation was generally ready to

join at the beginning of the second line. The old church was reputed to have wonderful congregational singing. He had a bald head, heavy eyebrows, and as he prayed in great earnestness, he would bring his two hands together with open fingers at the close of each sentence. I used to wonder how he could make all his fingers meet so exactly while his eyes were closed. For many years he was superintendent of the Sunday School which met previous to the morning service. Occasionally he would call us all at the close of school into the centre seats and give us a talk. One day he talked to us about being kind to each other, warned us against fighting, and then asked if, going home from school some boy would come up and hit you, what would you do? I held up my hand. "Well, what would you do, Colin?" "I would run," I answered, and that is what I would do, for I would go a long distance out of my way to escape a scrap. He said, "That is right; better than remain and fight."

Our chief lesson was learning verses. For one verse we received a ticket. When we received ten tickets we received a card, and ten cards secured a book. It was common to recite whole chapters. I had committed the whole Sermon on the Mount. The short verses of the Beatitudes tempted me to begin there. There were no lesson leaflets or quarterlies. No one knew what the

lesson would be except the teacher. He made his own choice. Though without lesson helps, we had given to us a wide knowledge of the Bible. I sometimes think our instruction was more thorough than today, notwithstanding the introduction of modern methods.

My first teacher was John Ramage. The descendants of the family are quite numerous. He would speak very rapidly and quite emphatically. I recall the first lesson. With his knees on the seat of one pew he talked to a seat full of boys in the other, about repentance. He told us what it was to repent, and the necessity of repentance in order to go to heaven. The impression of that first lesson was never forgotten.

Andrew Sherriff was an outstanding Christian in character and activity. His musical talent was given entirely and freely to the church. He encouraged every winter the organization of a singing school, which met weekly in the church. His voice was heard frequently in testimony and prayer. During the revival of 1868 he was very active and afterwards with great rejoicing he saw one and another of the young people and some of his own grandchildren become followers of Christ and unite with the church. At the close of a service one evening, when much interest was manifest, his emotions were unusually awakened. After he left the church, walk-

ing towards home, he had a heart seizure. By friends he was carried into the old log church used then as a private residence, and died in October, 1870. He had often expressed the wish that he might die in church. Everyone who knew him felt sure he would be immediately at home in the presence of his Saviour and the saints, and that his voice would form part of the choir around the throne.

George Edwards, the third of the seven sons of William Edwards (the youngest son of John Edwards, Sr.) is worthy of a prominent place among the worthies of Clarence church. He returned from college as a civil engineer, but there was little to do in that line. He opened a store on the old farm, and after some years moved his business over to Thurso, where he prospered and for years carried on a successful business. After he settled in business in Clarence, he succeeded Andrew Sherriff as superintendent of the Sunday School. This was during the time that my mind was very much exercised as to my spiritual condition. He gave his time, talent, and money to the extension of the Kingdom. After going to Thurso he was superintendent of the Sunday School for many years. He was aggressive and introduced new methods that would make the school more effective. There were no Sunday School lesson helps in those

days, but he would announce for the following Sunday the lesson that was to be used by each teacher. He awakened an interest in the Sunday Schools of the Association. It was said by a prominent co-laborer: "No man in the Ottawa Valley gave more faithful and unselfish service to Sunday School and church." Here is the annual report of the Clarence Baptist Sunday School given at their Christmas entertainment, 1868: No. of teachers, 6; No. of scholars, 70; Average throughout the year, 40; No. of verses recited, 11 521.

In Clarence he taught a class of boys, of which I was one. He was a real Bible teacher and the help we received could not be measured. His class was one of the most helpful institutions with which I have ever been connected. He was a friend, and always the same, not at all gushing but always genuine. He meant much to me in my young Christian life.

The night three of us, Miss Susan Woodley, a blind girl, Miss Amelia Gardiner, and myself were examined by the whole church, which was the custom then, previous to baptism, I gave what to myself was a very unsatisfactory account of my conversion. We were asked to retire until the church decided upon each case. I fully expected they would ask me to delay. They accepted me, but George Edwards had

misgivings. He often referred to it in after years. He feared I was making a mistake. To satisfy himself, he walked home with me, and made further inquiry. He became satisfied and then encouraged me. He was extremely conscientious. He disliked the tobacco habit. He did not think it right to use it in any form. Therefore he concluded that it would not be consistent for him to sell it, and he never did. He could have made many hundreds of dollars from this class of customer, but willingly made the sacrifice. He met eventually with reverses in business.

He came to Alberta with his boys who were in business in Ponoka. So we often met in those later years when he had reached four-score and more. His end was a sad event. He had interests in timber at Cold Lake, Alberta. He spent the winter in his shack looking after this, his only possession. He went to the post office, nine miles across the lake. As he walked that distance at eighty-four years of age, night overtook him and he missed the trail. It was below zero. His body was found in the woods two days after. I had the honor of conducting his memorial service in Ponoka, where his remains were interred.

The winter previous to his death he related to me this incident in his experience: "I was in

the forest, inspecting timber. Overtaken by darkness I was lost. I knew it would be about impossible to find my way out as the clouds hid from my sight all stars. It was about 30 below zero. My only hope was a fire, beside which I could spend the night. I gathered dry wood and birch bark. I had only a few matches. (He never was a smoker.) My first match went out; the second one failed to kindle the firewood I had carefully prepared. Finally I took out my last match. I knew if this failed I was a dead man; my frozen body would be found somewhere in the woods, as I had no hope I ever could struggle through the deep snow to any place of safety. How carefully I got the fine birch together and with every precaution I could think of gathered myself and coat around it that no whiff of wind would quench it, and committed my keeping into the hand of God. I cannot describe my feelings at that moment. I cannot express in words the sense of joy and gratitude that sprang up in my whole being as I saw the fire start and the blaze arise. Its very sparkling and roar seemed like the laughter that was rising in my heart. The next morning, sunrise showed me my way home and I am safe." But this night he had no match and therefore perished in the forest within a mile of his abode, where a warm fire and his servant awaited him. How often

there is only a step—sometimes a match between us and death.

He was one of the truest servants of God I ever knew. He had one son Reginald, who entered the ministry, was a graduate of Brandon College, was ordained in Alberta, and while pastor in Kelowna, B.C., passed into an early grave greatly lamented.

William Edwards, known as Squire Edwards, was born in Hampshire, England, in 1810. He was the youngest son of John Edwards, Sr. Though he never became a member of the Clarence church, this story would not be complete without reference to him. He was a prominent member of the congregation. He was an outstanding citizen. with a strong personality, bright intellect, had talent as a writer of prose and even poetry. He was a vivacious conversationalist, a genial and friendly neighbor, possessed of rare judgment and common sense, and an efficient public officer. He was Warden for the counties of Russel and Prescott, a successful farmer with a good business ability—a good husband and a wise father of a large family of seven boys and three girls, all of whom have taken not only a very honorable, but a very prominent place in the world and in the church. He had strong convictions in religion, as his writings prove, lived a moral life, and was a strong ad-

vocate of prohibition and the means of the Dunkin Act being passed in Clarence, never to be repealed. His robust figure, ruddy face, and cheerful voice made up one of the most noticeable personalities of my boyhood acquaintances. We passed his house going to school, church and post office. He passed through all the great revivals under the ministry of his father and brother, without ever being led to take a stand for Christ and the church. He had profound respect for the church, religion, and all religious people, and was regularly in his place on Sunday. He was intelligent as to Bible teaching and in debate could quote Scripture very readily. All his family but one became active members of the Baptist church. It was my privilege to go to school with all of them but the three eldest. It was some months after the great revival of 1868 that one Sunday morning after pastor J. S. Ross had preached, Squire Edwards stood up in his pew beside his wife and family and said, "Pastor, I have something I want to tell you and the people. I have been a great sinner, but I have found a great Saviour." That was all he said, and he sat down. The congregation was in tears and the pastor could not control his voice to speak. I had been a Christian for some months, and the scene is as vivid as if it had been yesterday. He

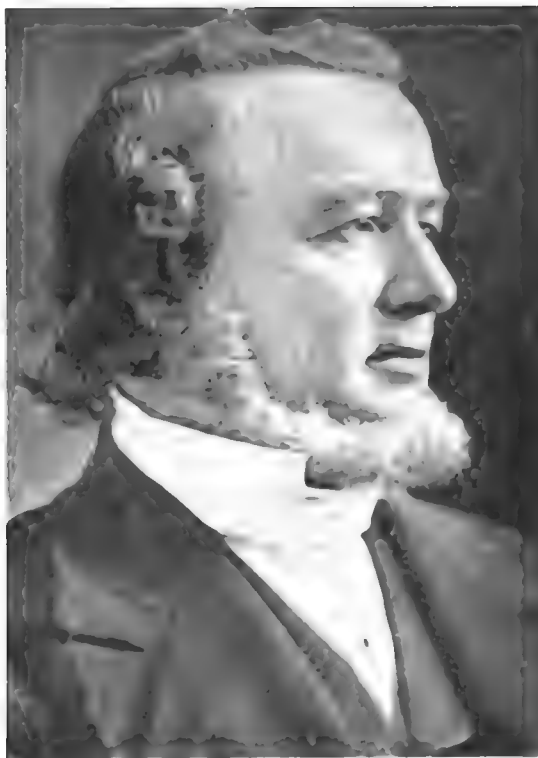
was baptized by Rev. D. McPhail in Ottawa, but for some reason never joined the church. He died in 1881 at 70 years of age.

Many names besides these that I have mentioned, went to make this rural church a mighty influence in the Ottawa Valley. I could mention many others who touched my young life with the warmth of their Christian love and cheerful word and wise counsel. They filled a most important place in making the church what it was. It is often that the general and his officers after the battle have their names blazed abroad, although they could have done nothing without the privates whose names are never mentioned.

VISITORS

This rural church often was visited by neighboring pastors, who seemed to go from home to help a brother minister more readily than they do now.

Rev. Daniel McPhail, "The Elijah of the Ottawa Valley," would occasionally be in the pulpit. His fiery message was accompanied with much tenderness. The earnestness of the man was manifest in his eyes which looked into the eyes of the hearer, his face beaming with the satisfaction he had in his Saviour—his voice that under the power of the Holy Ghost seemed to



REV. R. A. FYFE, D.D.



MR. JAMES ERSKINE



MRS. JAMES ERSKINE



MRS. ALEX EDWARDS
nee Miss Eliza Roe



MR. ANDREW SHERIFF

go through the ear into the heart, and his gesture with that noted crooked finger, seemed to draw and point at the same time. It is a great loss to the world that the biography of Daniel McPhail was never published. I am always grateful that he touched my life.

Then Rev. W. K. Anderson (D.D. from McMaster, after he retired), "the Elisha of the Ottawa Valley," from his rural church of Breadalbane, was frequently in the pulpit. The exchange was a double blessing. He was a preacher of love. He could not be boisterous, but with his pleasant face and mild voice he would bring a message of tenderness that gave him access to many a tired soul and made him the lovable servant of God that he was. While Daniel McPhail would strike a hard blow effectively, W. K. Anderson would pat on the back and encourage into goodness.

John Dempsey (D.D. also from McMaster), only once in my day visited Clarence. In early years he was a frequent visitor and an effectual evangelist. He preached a characteristic sermon from the text, "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."

Dr. Dempsey preached the Law and the Gospel. He would announce the terrors of the Law until the guilty soul was lacerated, and then he

would pour in the oil of the Gospel. He had been converted under Daniel McPhail. He had been a chore boy in the home of Deacon Robert Cummings of South Gower. Mr. McPhail was visiting at the home, and all day the boy Dempsey avoided him. He was asked to get McPhail's horse into the cutter, and in doing so kept on the opposite side of the horse from McPhail, and was on his guard. But McPhail wanted to adjust some strap on the other side, and then with one word of truth he was enabled to enter the point of the sword of the Spirit into Dempsey's heart. He had a very marked conversion after a season of severe conviction. He went to Montreal Baptist College and became pastor of St. Andrew's church, which became strong under his ministry. Under the ministry of these three men, McPhail, Anderson, and Dempsey, Ottawa Valley Baptist churches advanced. They were a real triumvirate in those days.

Then we would have visits from travelling temperance lecturers, as it was the age of total abstinence. The pledge was circulated for signatures at every meeting. The church made serious business of this propaganda, with the most wholesome results.

The church had a visit from Rev. Lachlan Taylor, a noted Methodist preacher of those days, giving a lecture on the Holy Land, which

he had just visited—a very exceptional experience at that time. He had on exhibition a bottle of water from the river Jordan. With this water he christened babies all over Canada. Report said that it never seemed to grow less—it was like Elijah's "cruse of oil."

CHAPTER V

GREAT REVIVALS

Under the early ministry of Clarence church, there was a constant increase. New people were continually settling in the new country. The church and ministry was very persistent in seeking the good of all and newcomers were not overlooked. It was the only church at work in the vicinity for many years, and therefore had a favorable opportunity. A definite evangelistic ministry inherited the spirit of the Haldanes. They were always alert to bring saving truth to all within reach, and while there seemed to be a continual growth, there were seasons of special manifestation of the Spirit's power. In the history of the church there were two gracious revivals.

During 1835 Mr. Edwards, Sr., was greatly depressed because of seeming growth of indifference in spiritual things. This was quite widespread. He was failing in his effort to awaken the people. They invited John Gilmour of Montreal, and William Fraser of Breadalbane, the Paul and Silas of the Ottawa Valley, to come to their aid. Shortly before this, both in Dalesville and Breadalbane, these devoted soul winners had been used mightily, and a very widespread awakening had been experienced.

The church at Fox's Point looked forward with great expectation to their coming. The story is told that after four days of most faithful and powerful preaching, without seeing any good effect of their labors, they returned home. The pastor and church were distressed, and the next day and night they cried mightily to God. That night fifteen were brought to rejoice in Christ, and there were about fifty inquirers. In a few days about sixty gave good evidence of conversion. Rev. John Edwards, Jr., came from his church at Dalesville to their assistance. The work spread up and down the river. There were few roads. The canoe was the most convenient means of transportation, and as all the settlements as yet bordered on the river, they could go from one settlement to another conveniently. I find this record: "Canoes in large numbers crowded with living freight of all ages could be seen steering for Fox's Point, and songs of gladness rising from glad hearts. For miles up and down the river, the interest was intense. Several townships shared in the blessing. Matters of the world were disregarded. Crops were left in the field uncared for. As a result, sixty-five were baptized and joined the church, and fully one hundred conversions were reported. Among those brought were men and women who became strong leaders and contin-

ued to the close of life to be pillars in the church of God. There was no talk of "mere excitement" and of very "little permanent" work being done. It was then that the foundation of the later aggressive evangelistic church was laid.

Another great revival was experienced in 1868. This occurred about two months after my union with the church, and I write from my personal knowledge. Rev. J. S. Ross was in the midst of a happy and successful pastorate. The churches of Thurso and Clarence were co-operating happily. In the early part of the summer he had several baptismal occasions.

A group of military officers doing some work of prospecting along the river had camped in Roe's Grove. They were very zealous Christians, although they claimed no church affiliation. Captain Dunlop, a young Scotchman from Glasgow, seemed to be the leader. They asked the privilege of preaching in the church Sunday night. The request was granted. Captain Dunlop conducted the service. He was personally attractive, fair with blue eyes, a pleasant voice, and a very friendly bearing. He did not take a text, but spoke at some length quietly but with force, and his message of simple truth was appreciated. The people generally were impressed with their earnestness. Mr. Ross had opened special evangelistic services in Thurso and in-

vited Captain Dunlop to assist, which he did. The interest grew and there were several conversions. The church in Thurso was filled each night. The church was deeply interested. Men and women who had taken no interest in spiritual matters were awakened and became very much in earnest in seeking to bring others. People began to come in from the country north, east, and west.

Their custom was to leave the meeting open after the address for anyone to speak, or pray or sing, but Christians were urged to speak to any unsaved person in the audience whom they could approach. It was exceedingly interesting to see Christian men, heads of large businesses going from seat to seat endeavoring to persuade their workmen and fellow business men to come to their Saviour. After a few weeks, the meetings moved over to "My Old Home Church." There was a deep interest and the church was filled with a most serious people. It was a common sight to see two or three seats full of men and women, many of them weeping bitterly as the Christian workers endeavored to point out the way to secure pardon and peace. The meetings continued at least four weeks during harvest time. Men toiled all day in the field and then walked two and three miles to the meeting every night. The most intense feeling

of joy and gladness was sometimes expressed in singing all the way home.

A Sunday morning was appointed for a baptismal service at Roe's Point, where so many during past years had been baptized. Baptistries were unknown in country churches. An immense throng had gathered from both sides of the river. The first to go down into the water with Pastor Ross was Captain Dunlop. His associates followed. Rev. Daniel McPhail was assisting Mr. Ross. They were both in the water, and over thirty were baptized the first Sunday. This service was repeated four Sundays in succession—thirty and forty being baptized each week. The great crowds that gathered by the river each Sunday were composed of many who had come a great distance. Captain Dunlop and his associates did not unite with the church, though they always joined in the communion service.

About the third week of the meetings, Lord Cecil, one of this military party, appeared. He was connected with the prominent Cecil family of England. He was reported to have wealth. He had been converted, according to his own story, when marching with his regiment down James Street, Hamilton. He also preached, and quite effectually. He, too, was baptized. There were nearly one hundred added to the Clarence

church as a result of these meetings. The revival spread to Cumberland, Buckingham, Templeton, and Ottawa. Many careless, godless men, professional and business men, became earnest Christians. There were instances of very remarkable conversions and many church members of various denominations were awakened. In some cases they claimed they had not until then experienced conversion. The churches were greatly helped and continued to profit from the awakening.

In the midst of this work, Captain Dunlop and Lord Cecil resigned their military positions in order to give themselves entirely to Christian work. Lord Cecil had money by which they could be supported. When they reached Ottawa they became identified with the Plymouth Brethren. They returned to Clarence, and found sympathizers not only among the converts but the older members. They met in the town hall, across the road from the church, for "breaking bread," as they termed the Lord's Supper. It meant a serious split in the church. But happily, many who went with them saw their mistake in a short time, and returned. The Assembly continued but a short time.

Notwithstanding this unhappy division, there were most gracious results from the services. The great mass of the converts continued

faithful, and many became most efficient and useful Christian workers. My own Christian life and my ministry all these years gained greatly from what I learned and experienced during that season of awakening.

Previous to the revival in Dalesville (Chatham Township as it was then called), the following incidents were recorded in 1836, revealing the devotion of young McPhail. John Gilmour and William Fraser were conducting meetings. "The son was continually missing at night. . . . Night after night had elapsed when his mother determined to follow her retiring son at a sufficient distance to be unseen. Over the snow and over the brook and into the forest she went after him: and there was he absorbed, bending the knee of fervent and solitary prayer for a blessing on the approaching meeting."

One Saturday evening he was on the road to the village store and was overcome with anxiety for the services of the next day. He retired to a great rock in the field where he thought to unburden his soul in prayer. He could not leave that spot until morning. The following Sunday the entire crowded congregation was moved. He saw his companions turn to the Lord. The power of that movement has not died out after a century has fled.

CHAPTER VI

AN INTENSIVE PAST AND THE EXTENSIVE PRESENT

Who has heard of, if they have not seen, the small rivulet in the Rockies that rushes down the mountain side, going as if it were hastening from the rough and tumble of its rocky path to find as soon as possible a resting place in some quiet glade, but instead, after dividing, grows into two mighty streams, becoming, one the mighty Saskatchewan that eventually empties itself into the Atlantic, and the other the mighty Columbia, flowing into the Pacific, and the two uniting again in the great world sea. We would compare Clarence church to both of these streams, for its influence has reached from coast to coast. We will endeavor to follow this little intensive rivulet, begun in the heart of John Edwards, Sr., by the Spirit of God under the influence of Haldane brothers in Scotland, continuing its flow in the forests of Ontario among a few home-makers in a new land, and see it as it now has gathered breadth and depth as it has moved forward to its present extensive proportions. By faith we can see it joined by a myriad of other streams, became a tumultuous ocean throng made up of a thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying with

a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb"—a great swelling anthem.

See the rivulet—a church with seven members and one inhabitant besides themselves—in a dense forest, one hundred miles from the nearest town, Montreal. All were humble tillers of the soil, unaccustomed to the arduous task of felling giants of the forest, and in their places endeavor to grow vegetables and cereals to sustain their families. If they had food, they were content without a surplus crop for market. Expectation of spiritual results was John Edwards' prime purpose in coming into such a place. Settlers, he fully believed, would come into this goodly land. They did come, and every effort was made to lead them, one by one, into a happy relationship with God. This prayer and effort was rewarded. Mr. Edwards would have a congregation of under one hundred, and often it was less than twenty-five, in his own private home or in some cabin in a distant settlement, reached by following or making a blazed trail through the woods, or paddling up and down the good, serviceable Ottawa river. Self-supporting from the beginning, he would ask no remuneration. With his own hands and that of his family, they tilled their land. Try to visualize all these handicaps to the establishing of a church and the spreading of the Gospel. With

our ordinary faith, our expectation of growth would have been meagre indeed. A dreary outlook and failure never met their eyes, and so without a discouraging word they went on, buoyed up by hope.

Note the energy of this pioneer, all week long making his home for his family, and all day Sunday tramping or paddling, and preaching; then a journey to England, at his own cost, to secure help for other needy districts; then joining with these new workers in an extensive territory to open up new centres; then another journey to the Old Land, to arrange for the establishing of a college to prepare men, many his own converts, to preach the Gospel. Then note the marvellous fact that all this was accomplished (and much more that is known only to God) in a short 18 years, before he was called from his labors in 1841, at the age of 62. Many of our great men were called early in life. His own son, on whom his mantle fell, died at 58; Dr. R. A. Fyfe at 68; Dr. T. L. Davidson at 58; J C. Yule at 35; D. A. McGuyar at 35; John Torrance at 40; Rev. J. P. McEwan at 50; Alex Grant at about 40. Men upon whom much dependence for leadership was placed were taken from us at the beginning of their life-work, when they seemed absolutely essential. Surely God's way are not our ways.

Let us follow the growth of the streams that we have seen start in a small way and flow down the "rough and tumble rock path," and see how large a stream it has become as it still moves on.

1. It was, and still is, a living stream that supplies the water of life to thirsty souls. Sometimes, as in the Jerusalem Church, daily they added to the church, such as are being saved. This condition does not continue always even with a church under apostolic leadership. Their chief object was to "seek and save the lost." They were rewarded. Hundreds were converted and baptized, instructed and set to work by its ministry. Christ's one and only object in coming into the world was "to seek and save the lost"; and He said, "As my Father hath sent me into the world, so I send you," or words to that effect. When a church or preacher makes teaching or organizing a primary task and soul-saving secondary failure dawns.

2. From Clarence church, as we have elsewhere noted, have come directly and indirectly other churches—Thurso, Papineauville, Buckingham, Cumberland, Rockland, and North Nanton Mills—each composed of members of Clarence church. From the efforts of Stephen Tucker, the first convert baptized in connection with the church, there have been brought into existence the churches of Arnprior, Fitzroy, McNab,

White Lake, Clarendon, and Pembroke; and other churches like Clarenceville, and Grenville have been greatly assisted. The churches of Ottawa had, and still have, among their most active and dependable members descendants of John Edwards and converts of the Clarence church. The only institution in the world to which God has given a charter is the church. To the church He has given the responsibility of sending His message of salvation to "every creature," therefore the church has meant more and has accomplished more for the salvation of men and the overthrowing of evil in any and every place where it has existed than any other organization known. The Clarence church grew from seven to 150 to 200 members at one time, even after some of these other churches were formed. So it is worthy of notice that this rural church of seven members, handicapped as it was in a new land, should be the mother of five churches, which in turn have grown to importance and usefulness.

3. There are reasons why this rural church is not today what it was. As has been already mentioned, the influx of French-Canadian Roman Catholics has supplanted the Protestant population. They purchased every available farm. A very successful beginning was made to reach these people with the Gospel, under

the pastorate of the late G. R. McFaul. Aided by the late Adam Burwash, a product of Breadalbane church, they aroused much excitement as they preached so faithfully on the streets of Rockland, a town in Clarence, that they brought upon themselves a riot in which their lives were endangered. Because of the disturbance of the peace, even Protestants discouraged their efforts. Many can picture that this hindrance to the work, to which Mr. Burwash had devoted his useful life and peculiar talents brought about his untimely and sudden death in the midst of his toil. For the present, it seems impossible for Protestantism to assimilate the French Catholic element. Then the Protestant population has decreased. because in these evil days there are few early marriages and families are not numbered on the fingers of two hands as in the good old days, consequently the Sunday School and church attendance has dwindled.

4. Then the establishment of another Protestant church in the community has decreased the opportunity of this church, that for fifty years was the only Protestant church in the township.

5. Then, we may as well openly acknowledge that in Clarence, as in many parts of the world, Baptists are not the propagandists they were over fifty years ago. The fervent evangelistic



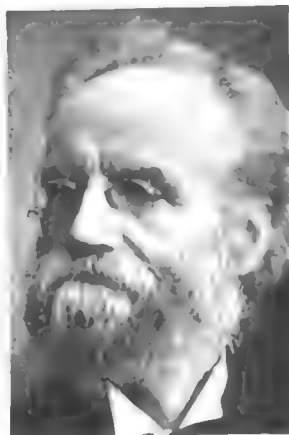
REV. P. H. McEWAN



REV. P. A. McEWAN, B.A.



MR. GEORGE EDWARDS



REV. JOHN HIGGINS



REV. J. S. ROSS

zeal has to some extent disappeared. Follow the two Edwards, Senior and Junior; J. S. Ross and John Higgins, as they went from home to home of all classes, pressing the claim of the Gospel upon parents and children, urging the need of repentance and the need of a new heart; and hear sermons that were delivered in tears as they pleaded with the people, like John the Baptist, "to flee from the wrath to come." Seeking conversions and baptizing converts was their everyday meat and drink. Were he to do the same kind of work today, the civility and culture of the preacher would be called in question.

6. Doubtless, too, there is not today the same strong conviction as to the doctrines which separate us from other religious bodies. There is not the same outspoken pronouncement upon believers' baptism and the same condemnation of infant sprinkling.

There is not the same importance placed upon the conversions of sinners.

Revival and conversions are not given the prominent place in the news items of our religious papers. In the Baptist reports sent to England in 1846, the account of revivals and conversions and articles upon the subject of Baptism had a very large place in nearly every issue. The large additions to our churches in those days came from religious bodies of other faiths. Dur-

ing those years, the Baptists of England and America made sweeping advancement — the greatest growth in their history. There is a tendency to approach these matters today apologetically.

Let us follow this stream in its more expansive flow. It is quite proper to consider that the influence of the first pastor of Clarence church was manifest in his effort to establish the Montreal Baptist College. If so, it issued in the life work of Elder Slaght in Norfolk County; of the first pastor of St. Catharine's church, Rev. William Hewson, and of an early pastor of Chatham, Archie Campbell; and also in the extensive labors of John Dempsey and W. K. Anderson and John Edwards, Jr., in Breadalbane, South Gower and Kemptville, St. Andrews and Dalesville. Daniel McPhail and John Higgins from Dalesville are also associated with the movement originating in Clarence. From McPhail's ministry in Osgoode came John McLaurin, who opened the Canadian Baptist Foreign Mission in India, which today numbers its church members over 20 000, with 1,400 native workers and 100 missionaries.

From the same ministry came Alexander McDonald, who went to Western Canada and opened that great work with its 20,000 church members and 200 churches.

I will not, I hope, be considered egoistic in saying that I, a product of Clarence church, after twenty happy years as pastor of four churches in Ontario, South Gower and Kemptville, St. Marys, Sarnia, and Galt, have had the honor of following up Alexander McDonald's work in the west and of organizing seventy-eight churches during forty years of joyous service.

Then there must be considered the mighty work wrought by men whom this first pastor of Clarence church brought into this country. e.g., John Gilmour, who organized and built the first church of Montreal, and later the Baptist College; Dr. R. A. Fyfe was a product of Montreal church, baptized by John Gilmour. Nor must we forget J. Edwards, Jr., in and about Peterborough; William Fraser and his faithful ministry in Breadalbane and Tiverton; the dozen ministers of the past centuries produced under this ministry, and the forty-year pastorate in Dalesville and Nottfield of John King; Daniel McPhail would sometimes say: "I have, during the last week, preaching every night in that school-house, made but one convert, but I have added to the Kingdom more than a whole world with its gold and glory, for one soul is worth more than a world; not a bad week's work."

So if Clarence church should die, it has not lived in vain.

CHAPTER VII THE LAST DAYS OF JOHN EDWARDS, Sr.

and Obituary Records as reported by his son,
John Edwards, Jr., at that time Pastor of
Dalesville Church

THE MONTREAL REGISTER
Wednesday, May 11, 1842

RAVAGES OF DEATH

With very mournful emotion we have to record the death of our endeared and venerable friend, Mr. John Edwards, of Clarence. On the 29th of last month he was suddenly called away after one week's illness, occasioned by a cold he took while preaching at Lochaber, which brought on a fatal erysipelas. Many will mourn the departure of one so devoted; for his praise is in the churches at home as well as among the fraternity in Canada. Knowing the value of the services he rendered to the cause of Christ, we cannot but deplore his removal, and honour his memory. A suitable notice of his life will soon be furnished, we trust, by a competent and filial pen. But we do not hesitate, considering his services and his age, to sum up his worth, by calling him the Father of the Canada Baptist Missionary Society. "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."

Since the above was written a letter of very mournful import has been received, which though private we are permitted to publish. Who will not sympathize with those who have thus been "broken with breach upon breach"?

Clarence, May 5, 1842.

Dear Brother Girdwood,—

Both my dear parents have passed from time into eternity. My dear mother, aged seventy-three, died last night at nine o'clock, after an illness of six days, and my dear father, aged sixty-three, died last Friday morning at two, having been only seven days ill. His disease was erysipelas. On the day before the disorder seized him, he attended a meeting on the opposite side of the river, where he preached on the great doctrines of

forgiveness and justification, much to the satisfaction of those who heard him. Several of his friends who were with him remarked that they had never seen him in better health and spirits for many years. Exposed, however, to the draft of air which came in at several broken panes of glass in the window of the house in which he preached, he took cold. Next morning he complained of being unwell, but went out and engaged in manual labour for a short time. About noon he came into the house very ill, was taken with great shivering, which was succeeded by strong fever, sore throat and difficulty of speaking; Saturday he appeared better, sat up, read most of the day, and even walked out a short distance. Sunday, though evidently labouring under disease, he rose, dressed himself, and spent the day reading his Bible and the life of Felix Neff. He spoke with great admiration of the devoted character of Neff, and expressed an ardent wish to visit the scene of his labours. At five p.m. he was bled. On being asked some time afterward how he felt, he replied he thought himself somewhat better. Next morning (Monday) he was worse, and grew extremely sore and the fever high, his thirst was great, and he suffered much pain in attempting to swallow. Medical aid was sought for, but could not be obtained. His disease from this time gained strength upon him, the unfavourable symptoms became more apparent, and he continued to struggle with it until Friday morning, the 29th April, when he gently and calmly breathed his last.

His end was peace. He knew he was dying, attempted to say much to those around him, but could not be understood. They caught the expression, "I am going home." On another occasion he said to William, "How vain and trifling are the things of time compared with the glorious righteousness of the adorable Redeemer." When my dear mother saw the evening before my father's death that it was probable he would not recover, having done every thing in her power for his comfort, she was seized with sickness herself, which confined her to bed. When she was told that he was very near his end, she remarked, "I have lost children, I have lost friends, but this is the heaviest stroke of all." I did not hear of my father's illness until after his death, owing to some mistake in the post office. On Saturday I received word of his death, and set off for Clarence. I arrived about ten, Sunday morning. It was indeed a house of mourning:

in a room to one end was the corpse of my departed father; in a room in the other lay my dying mother. She was glad to see me, and enquired for the welfare of my wife. A short time before, she had requested to see the body of her dear husband ere it was carried to the silent grave. Some friends brought in the coffin, the lid was partly removed, and I raised her up to **take the last look**. "Ah," said she, "he looks like himself; that will do—but I cannot cry, if I could cry it would afford me relief, but I cannot, I cried more for little Annie than I did for your father." She complained of great pains in her breast and side. She observed, "that the pain at her heart made her feel as if it were likely to break"; and again, "nature is fast sinking and cannot last long." Brother Tucker and myself spoke freely to her of death, and of her hopes for eternity. She intimated that she expected it soon to take place, and that her hope rested on the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. She had a deep view of her own sinfulness, and also great confidence in the power and grace of the Saviour.

Monday and Tuesday she was getting weaker. The latter day she suffered a good deal of pain, yesterday she was more easy, towards evening it became evident she was dying. I again learned from her in view of death that her trust was in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We then bade her farewell, and committed her soul to God in prayer. She had laboured for breath through the day, now it became less difficult, breathing fainter and fainter, until a gentle gasp and a dropping of the head to one side told us all was over. Yes, that faithful anxious spirit that never wished the absence of her dear companion, now gladly joined him where no sin, no sorrow, no separation is known. "They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."

My dear father was buried last Sunday, my mother will be buried on Saturday. Thus, dear brother, in the short space of twenty-one days the Lord has taken from me my only much beloved child, and dear honoured parents: but He gave all at first, and now He takes away. I desire unfeignedly to say, "Blessed be His Holy Name." Pray for us that these afflictions may not be lost upon us, but be abundantly sanctified.

I am, dear brother, yours sincerely,

JOHN EDWARDS.

THE MONTREAL REGISTER

Thursday, January 12, 1843

BIOGRAPHY Mr. John Edwards

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He died on the 29th April, just one week from the time he was taken ill, and soon after he had completed his 63rd year. How wonderful the ways of God. Mr. Edwards had been in dangers often and deaths often in Scotland, Portsmouth Dockyard,—on the ocean,—in the woods and on the waters of Canada, and had many remarkable preservations from a violent death. About the year 1833, being 20 miles from home, he wished to take a passage on the steamboat navigating the Ottawa. The person who steered the canoe, through fright or mistake, directed it towards the bow of the steamer. Though the engine had been stopped, the paddle wheels were still going; in a moment the canoe was buried, the man who had been in its stern was soon picked up, but Mr. Edwards being brought into immediate contact with the paddle wheel instinctively caught it with the death grasp of a drowning man, and was carried round whilst the wheel made two revolutions. The space between the edge of the paddle and the beam supporting the paddle box was only 6 or 8 inches; how he passed this several times without being severely crushed was wonderful; he was taken out of his perilous situation with only a few slight bruises. When he reached the deck the captain said, "Ah, Edwards, your work is not done yet." Subsequent events showed the truth of this observation. Though God's servants are immortal until the work is done so that nothing shall kill them, yet when that is the case a straw, a breath of air, may prove sufficient to terminate life. It was so with the subject of this memoir. The trifling cause already mentioned brought on symptoms which ended in death.

In drawing an outline of Mr. Edwards' character, it is not designed to represent him as faultless. He had sins which cleaved to him and which he deeply deplored. But it is intended to present a few of those traits which predominated chiefly in his spirit and conduct.

He was a good man. He lived not for himself, but derived

greatest enjoyment in making others happy, and whenever and however he could he was ready to do good unto all men.

He was a godly man. His piety was the offspring of principle rather than of emotion. He greatly loved the Word of God, it was his treasure and delight, he read and searched it not as a critic but as a plain Christian—had much of it stored away in his memory, and could readily quote it in his preaching; he had a good understanding of much of it, and possessed clear views of its most important doctrines. To him the truths of the Bible were a support in time of trouble, and he could from his own experience direct others to the same source. To illustrate this, the following extract is given from a letter he sent to one of his sons, when the latter had the prospect of losing an only and peculiarly interesting child:

"We all feel deeply grieved to hear of poor little A's continued and distressing illness. We sincerely sympathize with you and dear S. in this trying providence, for we necessarily suppose you have suffered all the pain of bereavement."

"Your mother and myself can enter into your feelings—we have realized the anguish attending the loss of a first-born. I well remember the thoughts that passed through my mind when I first saw the probability of our dear child's dying. I imagined it impossible that I could bear the separation—but when the time came I found the promise verified, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." We know from His Holy Word that all things that pertain to us are under the management of infinite wisdom—that our Heavenly Father is too wise to err, and too loving to inflict any more pain on his children than is necessary for their good. We cannot see it now, but the time will come when in the light of eternity we shall exclaim with rapture, "He hath done all things well." I suppose had any one told good Jacob, (when in great anguish of spirit he said, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me"), "you are mistaken—these things will all be for your good, and for the good of your family"; he would have been **very** loath to receive such a declaration. But the issue proved that he **was** mistaken, and that in those trying dispensations God was bringing about the fulfilment of his promises in the enlargement of Jacob and his family.

‘Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face.’

“I have lately read through the book of Job, and have been much struck with the salutary effects produced on him by his affliction. Job was what we would call a first rate character, but still he had dross. The reasonings of his friends could produce no good effect, until God spake: it was then that the humble confession flowed from his lips, ‘I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.’ The end was gained. Job came out of the furnace as gold seven times purified. I am aware my dear son, that it is much easier to point out what we should be and do under such circumstances than to reduce it to practice. I have no doubt, however, that both of you will be enabled on this trying occasion to cast your burden on the Lord: mind he has said ‘I will sustain thee, call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me.’ See the following passages, Zec. XIII:9; 1 Peter I, 6, 8, and 1 Sam. XXX:6.”

This letter was written 19 days before his own death; meanwhile the dear child to whom he alludes, died. In another letter, written only four days before his last illness commenced, is this expression:

“We must go to her; she shall not return to us. This is the first of our grandchildren that your mother and I have been called to mourn over, may it be sanctified to us, and to you my dear children, and Oh! that we may be ready when the summons comes to call us home.”

He loved the people of God. In his estimation a **Christian** was the highest style of man, and “the saints were the excellent of the earth in whom was all his delight.” He loved to receive visits from them, his house was open for their reception, and often did he take sweet counsel with them when partaking of his hospitalities. In travelling he would often go out of his way to call upon Christians of whom he had heard, but never seen before, and thus he frequently realized what Paul anticipated in going to Rome, mutual comfort, arising from mutual faith. His love to the people of God was not of a sectarian character.

Though conscientiously attached to the Baptist denomination, and glad to find those who agreed in sentiment with him; yet wherever he beheld the image of Christ, he loved the individual possessing it, for Christ's sake. Thus he could number many dear friends of other denominations, of whom he would say, "They are the Lord's people, I expect to meet them in heaven."

He felt a deep interest in the prosperity of true religion. To promote it he manifested much zeal, devotedness and untiring energy. For this he had laboured, endured privations, and encountered difficulties. Himself and all that he had was consecrated to the cause of Christ. It was not his own things he sought, but the things which are Christ's. A proof of the disinterestedness which accompanied his efforts is evident from that fact that, with some very trifling exceptions the labourer in the gospel unworthy of his hire, but the thing had not been so done to him, and he went on determined to do what he could. Often did he after labouring hard all the week for the bread which perisheth, labour on the first day of the week, in body as well as mind, to carry the bread of life to others. His desire to see the kingdom of grace flourish seemed to increase as he drew near the kingdom of glory. Well do some of his friends now remember that when delivering an address at Osgoode, a short time before his death, his soul seemed enraptured with holy delight, in view of this moral wilderness becoming a garden of the Lord, when to use his own expression, "from Lake Superior to Anticosti, and from the St. Lawrence to the Ottawa, the woods of Canada shall be vocal with the high praises of Jehovah."

It may not be improper here to remark, that Mr. Edwards had to contend with the disadvantages arising from the want of education. Three months' tuition was all he ever had, yet he never made this circumstance an excuse for neglecting to attempt that which he might accomplish. His frequent advice to others was, "Serve the Lord with the best you have, and He will make it more." At the same time he was far from ever despising learning in others. Had he possessed it, there is no doubt his usefulness would in many instances have been greatly increased. He considered learning, when made subservient to piety, of great value to a minister of the gospel, and on this

ground was a warm friend to the institution established in Montreal for educating pious young men.

Upon the death of Mr. Edwards, several letters containing expressions of sympathy were received from his friends by his surviving family, a few extracts from which will be inserted. The first is from the pen of Mr. J. Girdwood, Corresponding Secretary of the Canada Baptist Missionary Society, conveying the condolence of the committee in this resolution.

"With sincere esteem for the memory of their late indefatigable agent, Mr. Edwards, Sr., this committee record their very high sense of his private worth as a Christian, and his public usefulness as a minister of Christ. They would express their affectionate sympathy with his bereaved relations, and indulge the hope that the rich consolations of that gospel, which was so precious to the heart of the departed saint, may be vouchsafed to them; and the committee would submissively bow to this dispensation of Providence, by which the Society is deprived of a valuable and successful labourer."

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Neil M'Neil, Congregational minister, Elgin, will show how he was regarded in the place of his nativity.

"Your three uncles and aunt, all your relatives, and your father's numerous Christian acquaintances, have felt this stroke very much. You are quite aware your uncles loved your father much. His zeal, his energy, his activity, his good sense, and his tender compassion for perishing souls, both on this and on your side of the Atlantic, raised him in the esteem of his early acquaintances, and gave him weight of character among all right-hearted men. All your relatives have felt the bereavement; they deplore it, but bear it with the spirit and principles of Christians. Your excellent father was not allowed to outlive his usefulness. He wrought well—he wrought successfully—and he wrought to the last. It was a sudden call from the field to the kingdom—from the cross to the crown. Permit me also to add, that although the Atlantic intervenes, I look upon myself by the decease of your excellent father to the bereaved of one of my highly valued and early **Christian friends**. It is nearly forty years since I first got acquainted with him in a prayer meeting in Leith. We were members of the same church, first in the Tabernacle; and then in the Congre-

gational church of Leith when first formed. There were ten or twelve young men of us in that prayer meeting. Christian affection and brotherly love were the element we breathed, and the spirit by which we were generally actuated. They were like Bethel meetings. Long before there was any word of city missions either in America or Great Britain, your father and I have at times traversed some of the lanes of Leith of a Sabbath afternoon or evening, spoken to the people about their souls, and left Tracts with them. I was not a little gratified in seeing your father in his **first and subsequent return** here from America, that after all the scenes through which he had passed, he was the same lively, simple, serious, unsophisticated Christian, that he was when I first knew him. In a sinful and changing world, it is a high gratification to find a Christian whose religious principles are of the firm texture to stand the tear and wear of the world for more than forty or fifty years, without being lost or tarnished among the bustle or business of life."

The next extract is from a letter written by Mr. J. Neave, of Portsea, and possesses the melancholy pleasing interest of having been written twenty-three days after the spirit of him to whom it is addressed had entered that rest so sweetly anticipated by the worthy writer.

"Think not, beloved brother, that my delay in writing arises from indifference. No, while my heart continues to beat, your remembrance will be dear to it. The happy years we spent together are never to be forgotten. In this false and faithless world it is difficult to find a real friend. Such I know you to be, and I bless God that we ever met. Is it wrong to hope that even in heaven we shall feel a stronger attachment from our earthly connection? Our earthly pilgrimage will soon close. O how delightful to believe that we shall then no longer be separated by the wide and storming Atlantic, but be like friends who having wandered far and long, have met at last at one common home to review the dangers, the labours, and the joys of the past in the clear light of heaven."

The following extract is from Mr. J. Gilmour, Baptist Minister, Peterborough, Upper Canada:

"Yours of the 30th ult. announcing the melancholy event of my much loved friend, your dear father's death, came duly to hand. Ever since its receipt my mind has assumed a mel-

ancholy sombrous impression. It is true he has gone to a much better world, mingles now with much superior society, and is engaged in employment of a much more elevated character; yet we should have much more preferred his detention here below. When I read your letter, one of the first thoughts which occurred to my mind was, Ah! he has got near the **Divine Redeemer** now. The Divine Redeemer was one of his favourite expressions. And sure I am, the loftiest conception ever conveyed to his mind through that expression is more than realized now; but my mind is slow to realize the thought that I shall never more meet with him on earth. It was at once pleasant and profitable to do so; our love to one another was ardent, constant and unabating; it was the love of principle, and knew no change. I must now cherish an affectionate regard for his memory, and perhaps in his more lofty movements he may sometimes affectionately think of me. God is constantly impoverishing this world by the withdrawal of choice spirits from the arena of strife, but then he is enriching with those spoils that world to which we are hastening, and for which we are being prepared. Oh, that through faith and patience we may be followers of them who now inherit the promises.

"The death of your dear father will be felt as an extensive and serious loss, but that which renders it so, softens the affliction a thousand fold; it gives brightness to our convictions of his present happiness and adds stimulus to our efforts. He died in the midst of his labours; he expired encompassed with a plan of benevolent exertion; his benevolent heart had planned more than his energetic hands and feet were allowed to accomplish; he fell asleep with his armour on. 'Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh shall find so doing'."

* * * *

MRS. MARGARET EDWARDS

was the faithful companion of her husband, sharing with him the joys and sorrows of life for nearly 40 years. During his last sickness she waited upon him as long as there was the least hope of his recovery, and when, on the afternoon of the day before he died, she perceived that his symptoms were fatal, she immediately sickened and was taken to bed. She had requested to be informd when any great change was apparent

in her dear husband. When it was evident he was dying, the melancholy tidings were conveyed to her by a friend; "I have lost children," said she, "I have lost friends, but this is the heaviest stroke of all." Before the corpse was taken to the grave, it was brought into her room, and she was raised up in the bed to take the last look. Her grief was of that deep, hard kind which is denied the relief afforded by tears. Nature continued to sink until 9 o'clock Wednesday evening, when she gently breathed her last; six days from the time of her being taken ill, aged 73 years. On the Saturday she was buried, seven days after her husband, in the same grave, the coffins lying side by side. Thus a kind Providence spared her the pain and desolation of a lonely widowhood. When she made a public profession of religion is not known, but she was a member of the Baptist Church, Portsea, under the pastoral care of Mr. J. Neave. Possessing a disposition which led her to look at the dark side of things, her opinion of her religious state was very doubtful, if not unfavourable. From this circumstance she did not enjoy so much of the comforts of religion as could have been desired. Still she loved the truth, those who made it known, and those who professed it. During the latter years of her life her New Testament was her daily companion. In prospect of death, she felt she was a sinful creature, but her trust was on the finished work of the Lord Jesus, and there is good reason to believe that she is now with her husband before the throne, praising the riches of redeeming love.

J. E.

St. Andrews.

CHAPTER VIII

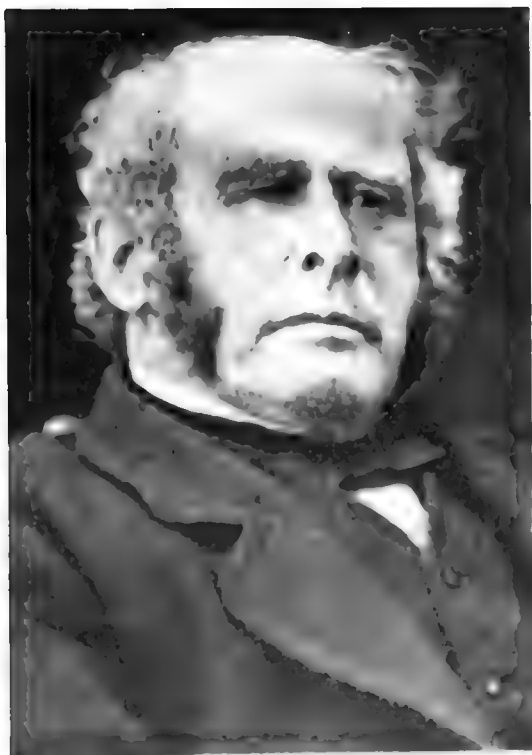
MY EARLY RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

My father was a Highland Scotchman. reared among the strictest of Presbyterians. He came from Killin, Perthshire, to Glengarry, Ontario, in 1840, where his uncle, John McLaurin, usually called "Cragnavie McLaurin," had lived in Breadalbane since 1816. We were always instructed very emphatically to abstain from evil practice or speech. To tell a lie or steal a pin were shunned as we would a wild beast. Sabbath was strictly observed. Shaving and polishing of shoes were attended to Saturday night. No reading but the Bible or a Sunday School book were permitted on the Sabbath. No boisterous talk, not even whistling was allowed. I can still hear that, "whisht!" when accidentally a note of a whistle broke from my lips. No games of any kind were indulged in. To go down to the Ottawa river and swim on Sunday would surely end in a drowning accident as a judgment, so earnest were the warnings against that sin. After a walk of two miles to church and Sunday School, a walk along the river with some older folks was the extent of carnal enjoyment in our life on that day.

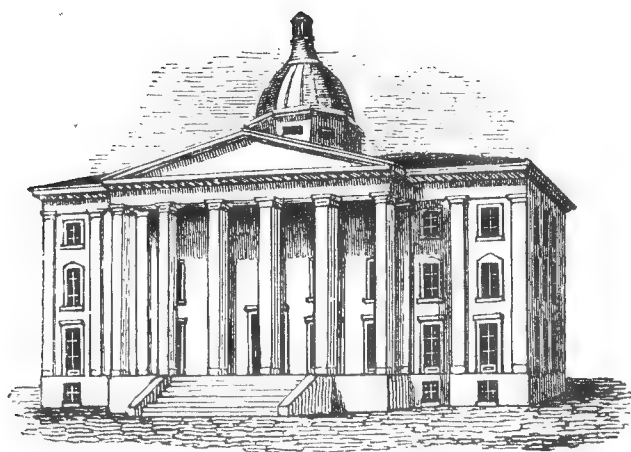
Were such restrictions in a young life beneficial? It was to me. My reverence for the first

day of the week, for religious things generally, became part of my nature, even before I was a Christian. I know some say, "I was made to go to church so much when I was young that I turned against it." But I find there are other causes for turning against the church. It was that which these object to that made Scotland a great church-going land from generation to generation. The Puritanism of the blue laws was different from the strictures of Scotch religious life. The former was force of law, the latter was an expression of principle and a trained nature. I am thankful that irreverence and disregard for holy practises was instilled into my growing life.

My mother, born on shipboard, as her parents came from Aberdeen, and who, with my father, made a Christian home, was taken from us when I was only four years old. So my father was mother to us until I was about twelve years of age, when a good woman, a stepmother, came into the house. The following gives an idea of the mother love we lost. My grandmother used to tell this story. The night before she died, she dreamed she had crossed the river to the store in Thurso, a common practice with her. She had my brother in the canoe with her. (The fact is, he was very dangerously ill at the time.) "Returning, the canoe capsized in deep water,



WILLIAM EDWARDS, Esq.



MONTREAL BAPTIST COLLEGE, 1840

and my feet touched the bottom, and I took George and held him up above the water. I was drowned but he was saved." Only a mother could have such a dream.

MY FIRST SERIOUS IMPRESSION:

My father timidly shrank from publicity. He could not take part in a prayer-meeting. I have heard good Christians like him being condemned as not having vital Christianity if they could not get up in a meeting and speak. But he regularly read a chapter after breakfast, and then would pray very fervently with us. After I would hear him read and pray, my mind at times would be greatly exercised. A playmate about this time said one day: "You know God up in Heaven hears all you say." I whispered something and asked, "Did He hear that?" He answered, "Yes." I whispered more quietly and inquired again, and he said: "God knows your thoughts." So, when my father prayed to God I became conscious of God's nearness. This thought at times made me unhappy as I remembered my naughtiness—I had a longing to be good. I did not understand what my father read, but the Bible was a different book to me from any other.

The solemn words about God left an indelible impression upon my young mind. He read with a solemn Highland Scotch tone of voice. He

would pronounce "Capernaum," placing the accent on the first syllable and making the last two syllables as one. Sepulchre, his accent on the second syllable. Solemnity and religion always go together with the Scotch. Ian McLaren said, "A Scotchman is always in his element at a funeral, while an Englishman is in his element at a wedding." I did not comprehend the meaning of prayer, but I had some idea that he was talking to God. I used to wish I could pray. But to me, God was so good and great, it would not be proper for me to talk with Him. Some sense of lack in my life made me feel unworthy of Him.

I was not taught any prayer or instructed at any time to pray. Many Scotch religionists were opposed to formalism and ritualism. A prayer not prompted from the heart of the petitioner, was only hypocrisy. Words do not constitute a prayer. So they did not teach their children prayers. Their thought was that to repeat solemn words professedly addressed to God that had no meaning to the person using them was really mere pretense. Some teach to a child what is called the "Lord's Prayer." It is not a child's prayer. It is rather a Christian philosopher's prayer. No child can comprehend the meaning of one petition in it. It was never intended to be publicly repeated as a prayer.

They also thought that prayer can come only from a renewed heart. So they always discouraged any ritualistic service. But I was prompted to pray privately from the example of my father and when a consciousness of my need was experienced. The first serious thought I had concerning my spiritual need was brought to me hearing the Bible read and prayer made at the family altar.

MY FIRST RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION:

When about six or seven years old, I began going to Sunday School. There was no infant class. I was in a class of boys about my own age. We met in the third seat from the stove on the west side of the church. Mr. John Ramage, Sr., was the teacher. On his knees upon a seat leaning upon the back of the pew, he talked to us seated in the next pew. He was a man with a grown family, at least the youngest were but my age. I do not remember the chapter of the lesson, but I remember the subject was repentance. He was a good man with a real Christian experience. He talked rapidly, emphatically, and fervently. The lesson made an impression upon my mind. Repentance became an open question to me from that on. A teacher later spoke upon the same subject while my mind was exercised. She taught us that repentance was being sorry for any wrong we

had committed. She told us if we were sorry for our sin and really felt badly about it, if we asked God, He would forgive us. That afternoon I went into a little wood on the side of the hill east of our old home, and cast myself upon my knees and wept over my sinfulness and asked forgiveness. There came a sense of relief. I obeyed and I was happy. But the sense of relief did not long remain with me. She had taught but a half truth. She did not explain that belief in Jesus, who died to take away sin, was essential to receiving forgiveness. My repentance needed "to be repented of again." I wanted to be a Christian. As the years went on, the desire grew. As I heard the Christian people talk about these matters (a more common matter of conversation then than now) my desire to be a Christian increased. Both Rev. G. A. Dougherty and Rev. J. S. Ross would come to our home and read and pray. My desire to be a Christian, to have a real sense of forgiveness, continued to grow. I was condemned, as I thought of God. I feared the consequence of sin. I knew I had offended a God who loved me, but I did not enjoy a sense of reconciliation with Him, because my sin was marked against me.

AN INQUIRING MIND:

About this time, Miss Eliza Roe, daughter of one of the prominent families of the church,

was my Sunday School teacher for a time, and afterwards my school teacher. She was interested in me, as she was in many others. She would converse with me upon the subject and endeavor to explain to me the way of salvation. Sometimes she would walk with me a mile past her gate to explain what believing in Jesus really meant. I was an earnest inquirer, but with all this teaching, the way still seemed dark. If it had not been for her persistent effort in following me and meeting my difficulties, I wonder sometimes if I would ever have become a Christian. I owe more to her than I can express. She afterwards became Mrs. Alexander Edwards, of the "Upper Edwards" family, as they were called. But she is now in Glory. I am glad that after I had preached one night, in Rockland, shortly before she died, I told her how much I appreciated her efforts in those days.

Mr. C. F. Edwards, years older than I, but in school with me, would often speak to me upon this question. He was a devoted Christian, and to the close of his life worked at it. Other older members of the church also would now and then speak helpfully to me. Men like James Erskine and William Lamb, believed in a practised personal evangelism. It was the spirit of the church. They understood that to be the meaning of Christ's command, when He said "Preach

the Gospel to every creature"—every individual. Preaching and teaching came under the same law of pedagogy. You do not teach a lesson, no matter how great a teacher you are, unless you succeed in making the pupil comprehend the lesson. That may require much repetition. You do not preach the Gospel unless you enable the hearer to comprehend it—to understand that faith in Christ because of His atonement for sin, brings a new life and reconciliation with God. To me that was repeated many times before I understood sufficiently to intelligently accept and trust and thus secure peace.

Here lies the tremendous responsibility of the preacher and everyone who would win souls to Christ. His responsibility does not cease until after the soul understands and on his own account knowingly accepts or rejects the truth. There are some who make light of the "simple Gospel," the A.B.C. of religious teaching. Some preach as if all are in a higher grade, forgetting that there is always an A.B.C. class coming on in every congregation. To preach beyond the understanding of a congregation is a most useless and foolish performance. To expect to be admired for scholarship in so doing is absurd. A noted jurist once said that he repeated his argument twelve times before he could feel sure that it was clearly understood by the twelve men

before him. The successful soul winner is not satisfied with merely saying, "Come to Jesus," "Believe," "Decide now." No, he uses parables and illustrations and continues to explain, and this will tax the mightiest intellect and the most serious preacher. "Tell me the old, old story." "Repeat the story o'er and o'er." "I love to tell the story; 'tis pleasant to repeat; it seems each time I tell it more wonderfully sweet."

AN ARROW OF CONVICTION FROM A BOW DRAWN AT A VENTURE:

I was in this inquiring state of mind when, in June, 1867, Miss Roe said to the school, "A young man named A. V. Timpany, who is going to India, is to speak in the church at 3 p.m. If you care to hear him, I will dismiss the school." We all went over to meet him. I recall very vividly the appearance of the young man, who came in with Rev. J. S. Ross. He had dark hair, a full beard, clear piercing eyes, a pleasant face and pleasing voice. He interested us all in an address that was suited to the intelligence of his small congregation. He told of the people of India, their ignorance of God, their idolatry; also of the heat and snakes and other things that he was likely to endure. He expressed his ardent desire to tell them of his wonderful Saviour. I was deeply interested. He was to sail shortly, via the Cape of Good Hope for the land of the

Telegus. He expressed a wish to shake hands with us before leaving. I stood between the door and the east window, waiting to enjoy the honor. As he took me by the hand, with an inquiring look he asked me, "Do you love Jesus?" I made no reply. I could not conscientiously say "Yes." My eyes filled with tears. We parted. For the first time, in my experience, I had a deep sense of condemnation. That I could not say "Yes" to that question gave me a conviction of guilt, from which I was not free until after I saw Jesus bearing my guilt. Miss Roe happened to be standing near, saw the effect of the question, and upon the first opportunity followed it up in her usual persistent fashion. All winter and spring I was perplexed, looking and not seeing, searching and not finding. But the spring of 1868 I became satisfied that I could and did accept Jesus as my Saviour. With two others I was examined by the church for baptism and church membership. We had to appear before the whole church in those days. After each of us gave our story and made an effort to answer questions, we were asked to retire and wait until the church took action. Somehow I felt that my testimony was unsatisfactory, that they would advise delay in my case, but I was accepted. But George Edwards, our Sunday School Superintendent, a very conscientious man,

feared I might be making a mistake. He walked down the road with me that night, inquiring still further into my experiences. He often told me in after years that he had grave doubts if I was really converted until after that walk with me. On a beautiful Sunday morning at Roe's Point on the Ottawa river, Rev. J. S. Ross baptized me. The river was placid as glass. The sandy beach bordered with trees at the base of the hill is an attractive spot. The church and friends stood on the shore. As I came up out of the water, the words came to my mind, "Ashamed of Jesus, that dear friend, on Whom my hope of Heaven depend!", as I faced the curious looks of my companions older than I, who had not yet found this friend. I was the only boy in the church.

But a few months after this I saw nearly every one of them baptized at that same spot. One thing I missed—a clear understanding of the meaning of this sacred ordinance. I knew it was an act of obedience; I knew I was following Jesus in being baptized; but I did not have the truth that I was buried with Christ and that my rising from that water was after the likeness of His resurrection. It was a happy morning when I was welcomed into the church and partook for the first time the emblems that commemorated His suffering and death

I have just stated that numbers shortly after this were brought into the Kingdom during a wonderful revival under Pastor Ross, Captain Dunlop and Lord Cecil. I have given details elsewhere in this booklet.

A FALL INTO THE SLOUGH OF DESPOND:

Under the wise help of my pastor, I was encouraged to offer prayer in the prayer meeting. But on my own account I stood up one night—and entreated others to accept this Saviour. My heart was burdened. I was longing to see them saved.

But one night on my way home from a meeting I made an effort to speak to one of my companions about the matter. I met with a rebuff. The failure caused me to turn my eyes towards myself and the question came, "Are you a Christian yourself?" I began to compare my experience with some of the experiences given by some of the converts that night. One young man said in his distress, while in the field ploughing, he went to a stump to pray, and right by that stump he was saved. I could not recall any such experience, and therefore concluded I was not really converted. The next day I, too, was ploughing and looked for a similar experience, but was disappointed. I examined the motives that had influenced me thus far. I concluded I was not converted and

still lost. I was terribly distressed. Before going to sleep I cried earnestly to God. I feared I had been false in my profession. What gave me additional distress was the fact that I had made an open confession, had been baptized, joined the church, had partaken of the Lord's Supper, and now discovered I was not a Christian.

It was the most distressing night I ever spent in my life. When I awoke in the morning, the black cloud was still there, and not a ray of light. I was ashamed to say anything about it to anyone, so kept it all to myself. I had many questions which I could not settle with any satisfaction to myself. First, I could not state the hour or even the day of my conversion, and if I was converted, surely I would know when I first trusted,—when I came out of darkness into the light. Conversion is a great change; it could not take place without my knowing it. And I was troubled fearing that I had wanted to be a Christian just to be saved from hell. That had been represented as a selfish motive by one of the preachers. It was not because I loved God that I professed to follow Him, but because I was afraid of Him. Another was that the change was not so great as it ought to be in a real conversion. My life was much different but my feelings were not

intense and deep as I noticed in others. Another matter that gave me trouble was that I had not really repented of my sin; I had not at this time shed a tear over my sin. I saw numbers the night before weeping and sobbing, and concluded that I never had a real conviction of sin, and so never had a real joy because of forgiveness.

I went out to work with my father where we were clearing land on the edge of the woods. Only one thought was on my mind all day. I went into the forest more than once to pray and seek relief, but all in vain. But in the afternoon I went to pray with great determination. My sin and folly nearly broke my heart, and I burst into weeping. As I sat weeping, the passage came to my mind, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed thy transgressions from thee." I received it as a message from God. The sun shone in. I was relieved, and went on that evening with a light heart. I was now sure I was converted. I could go to the spot. I could name the day and the hour. I had repented, for I had felt my sins that afternoon as I never felt them before. The change that I had experienced was proof to me that I was converted now.

On my way to the meeting I made up my mind that I would make an open confession

of my mistake, and of my present assurance. I did not, because before the opportunity came a black cloud came over me; the light was gone, I was in distress, and I was not yet saved. This time my trouble was that I thought I did not have the right kind of faith. Some one had said, "You are not saved because you feel you are saved. You must not trust your feelings; you must trust Christ," and I was not trusting Christ as I thought. So I kept quiet. I remember they were singing, "Happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away." I stopped as it dawned upon me, "My sins are not washed away and so I cannot sing it." I was in this state of mind for days—sometimes sad, sometimes glad. I battled with doubt day by day; in fact, I could say hour by hour, for the question was never out of my mind. Often I would repeat the words we used to sing,

"I do believe. I will believe

That Jesus died for me.

That on the cross He shed His blood

From sin to set me free."

and I would say, "I do believe; I will believe" and therefore I am saved; I must be saved.

Sometimes the burden would leave me, and sometimes it would not, but if it left me it would return. Something would say, "You do not believe right or you would be saved." Some-

times when I would insist in saying "I do believe" a voice would say, "You are all right, peace would come." Then I would ask myself, "Is that voice that whispers to me the voice of the Spirit or of the devil?" Our preacher would sometimes warn us and say, "The devil sometimes would make you believe you are saved when you are not, just to deceive you. When he cannot persuade you away from seeking a Saviour, then he will if possible get you to rest upon a false hope." Many times then I would have given the world if I had it to be able to tell whether it was the Holy Spirit or the devil that impressed me. So many have said to me, "I am guided by the Spirit" and interpret that strong impression that comes to them as being the Spirit's voice. I have never been able to be sure of the Spirit's guidance from a mere impression. Sometimes it was right, sometimes wrong. Only by a knowledge of duty from the teaching of God's Word, and by a knowledge of myself and the demands made upon me, am I sure that the Holy Spirit is leading me. I was deeply impressed with the need of making sure whether I was saved or not; I was led to believe that many make a fatal mistake here, in some cases to their eternal loss. Paul said, "Let no man deceive himself."

It has always been a serious matter to me,

encouraging a person—young or old—who was entering the Christian life to make sure that they were resting on Christ, not on mere feeling, or a mere wish to be saved. I would not want a soul to say to me on the Judgment Day, “Why did you encourage me to believe I was saved and urge me to be baptized and join the church. Here I am not saved, but lost forever.” You cannot conceive of a more awful disappointment being experienced by a soul. Surely he that winneth souls must be wise.

Well, as I said, this experience of uncertainty continued for days. One day I was out at work clearing land all day alone. Through the whole day my soul was burdened. I had to go for shelter from a rain. I said, “Lord, keep the rain falling until I am saved,” for I was on my knees earnestly looking for some assurance that God had forgiven me. I had promised to continue as long as the rain continued. That evening on my way home on the path through the woods, I stopped, put down my axe and leaning on the handle I looked up and said, “Lord, why can I not be saved? Why can I not receive forgiveness?” As I looked I saw in my mind Christ on the cross, and he uttered the words, “It is finished.” I said, “What is finished?” “The work that you ought to have done for your salvation but could not, I have

done for you. I died to save you. I died that your sin might be forgiven. I bear your sins. Can you not trust me?" I said, "Lord, if I trust You for this am I saved, no matter how I feel or what my experience is?" Then the passage came clear and satisfying, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"; and I reasoned. "I have everlasting life; now I will not worry about when it began, or under what conditions, or experiences." I accepted the terms then and there. I have not spent five minutes nor one minute since then wondering whether I am saved or not, or whether I will go to heaven or not. My heart was filled with a real joy and solid satisfaction, from that moment until now. When I go back to the old home two miles down the river from Clarence church I frequently walk quietly back to near where I stood on that old path, and bare my head and look up with a heart full of thanksgiving for the experiences of that hour in August, 1868.

That spot on the old farm is my Calvary. I have a keener sense of what transpired on the Cross when I go to that spot than I had when I stood on the spot in Jerusalem where they say He was crucified. What counts is the personal trust in the person Christ, not the time or place, is sacred and effectual. It is being really connected with Christ by faith—that is a reality.

Sometimes I ask myself, "Was I saved then or had I been saved weeks before?" Often friends who hear me tell this story ask me the same question. I say, "I do not know." This I know, I was saved from that time on. and yet I have a hope that I was saved weeks before. I was sincere, much in earnest. It had been explained to me very carefully by my Sunday School teacher, Miss Roe, and my pastor, what it was to believe in Christ, and as far as I knew I was trusting Him as my Saviour. There was a settled determination to live a different life, and I believe the fruits of regeneration were visible. I am not sure to this day but that I was a real Christian before that afternoon. I sometimes think I was in the Slough of Despond, and at last got my feet on the steps that led me out, or I was in Doubting Castle, and that afternoon found the key that unlocked the door. One thing I know—I am saved now anyway. I now enjoy the full "assurance of faith."

Was it necessary for me to have those days of distress? I do not now regret it; in fact, I am thankful that I passed through those days of inquiry. That evening on my way to the meeting, my brother, who had professed to have found Christ some weeks before this, expressed to me the doubts that were troubling him as to whether he was really converted. I used my

new conception of the plan of salvation in explaining it to him, and he said, "Oh, I see it now. It is all right. Trust Christ. He saves." That is the one reason why I am thankful for the experience. It has enabled me to make plain the way to seeking souls as I otherwise could not. I am sure that I have been able to preach with a stronger conviction that Christ's death on the cross is the one ground of salvation. You can preach all you know about Christ apart from His death for the sinner, and you have no life-giving word. Therefore, Paul preached not only Christ, but Christ crucified. Christ said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The death of Christ is the magnet. Remove the cross from your preaching—its power vanishes.

From that day on I continued to enjoy constant peace of mind as to my salvation, and then came a growing passion to tell others. The fact is, all the call I had to the ministry came to me that afternoon. I just wanted to tell everyone of this wonderful salvation. Though only fourteen years old, I felt sometimes as if I would just like to go out and preach. Sometimes listening to a preacher, I would say: "Why does he not make that plainer and appeal more strongly to the people to accept the Saviour?" If I had not had that experience, it is possible I

would not have entered the ministry, or if I had, my ministry would have been very ineffectual. I would be preaching theories instead of realities.

During the summer of 1869, Rev. R. A. Fyfe, D.D., visited Clarence church one week-day afternoon on behalf of the College at Woodstock. Our teacher again dismissed the school, so that those who wished might hear him. It was raining. About twenty had gathered. Pastor Ross introduced him to several of the men about the door. His address was simply a story of what they had at Woodstock in the way of buildings, library, students and teachers, and what they were trying to do in the College. His personality, his cordial friendliness and his story of the school compelled me then and there to resolve that I would go to that College.

January, 1871, a little more than two years after that experience, I went to Woodstock College and began my preparation for the ministry. A month after entering College, I was seventeen years old. How happy I was that I would be able to tell the unsaved people about this wonderful Saviour. I never had a question in my mind as to whether I was called to preach or not. Nothing ever occurred in my life that caused me to hesitate as to what my life's work was. I might be out of money, as I often was,

and saw no prospect of receiving any, yet my duty was plain: I must continue. Often fellow-students would say to me: "I wish I was as sure as you are that I am called to the ministry." I never remember weighing in my mind for a moment whether I would get a church or not, or as to what salary would be forthcoming. It never gave me an anxious thought. My duty was plain: I must spend my life trying to so preach Christ that souls might be saved. My greatest happiness and satisfaction has come from being able effectually to preach the Gospel.

Many times since, and particularly in later years, I have examined my experiences of those days. As I analyze them at this distance, I have concluded that the cause of my doubt was the lack of a clear understanding of the object of my faith. Faith is often misplaced. Faith does not save. Faith is that which connects with the One who saves. I knew Christ was the object of my faith. I knew He was the only Saviour. I knew He was willing to save me, He wanted to save me, He was able to save me. But what puzzled me was: "How can my sin be passed by, how can I be forgiven?" I somehow felt sure He could not say out of His loving heart: "Just forget your sin, let bygones be bygones, go and do the best you can." I felt somehow that repenting of my sin and even

living a changed life would not be sufficient ground for granting forgiveness, as my most genuine repentance and my best life were very imperfect. Happy feelings, good intentions and even good deeds, because they were all so changeable, gave me no permanent assurance that God had accepted me. How then could I ever be assured that my sin was forgiven? My sin was the problem. I knew sin separated me from God and would keep me out of Heaven unless it was removed, and how was I to know the means of its removal?

It was not until I discovered the fact that Jesus upon the cross bore my sin. He died that I might live; He suffered that I might escape suffering for my own sin. Until I saw and understood that Christ was my substitute, the vicarious sacrifice for my sin, He that did by His righteous life and death what I could not do to make me acceptable to God, not until then did I see clearly that God could, with any sense of honor, forgive me. When I learned that He died for me, that my sin might be forgiven, and by simply accepting this act of His for me, the assurance of forgiveness was mine. The word "atonement" was not known to me at this time. How Christ could take my place was to me a mystery. What arrangement there was between Him and the Father I could not and do not now

understand, but Jesus, who in His own body on the cross bore my sin, gives me perfect assurance that I will not have to suffer for my sin.

We are to believe in Christ and Him crucified. If you had a New Testament, containing the story of the birth of Jesus, His holy life, the Sermon on the Mount, the Parables, the Miracles, His own words, revealing His Divine character, but omitting the story of Calvary, it could not give you the Gospel by which men are saved. The dynamic of the Bible is the Cross. The Cross is the central fact of the Bible. All previous history looked forward to the Cross, all history since looks back to the Cross. When in Palestine, I learned that Jerusalem is the objective of every tourist, and that the place where Jesus was crucified is the objective of every visitor to Jerusalem. Bethlehem, Nazarene, the Jordan, lovely Galilee, Mount of Olives, all had to take a secondary place to Calvary. It is so in the Christian thought. The Cross is the dynamic of every sermon and every Christian life.

“In the Cross of Christ I glory
Towering o’er the wrecks of time.
All the light of sacred story,
Gathers round His head sublime.”

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